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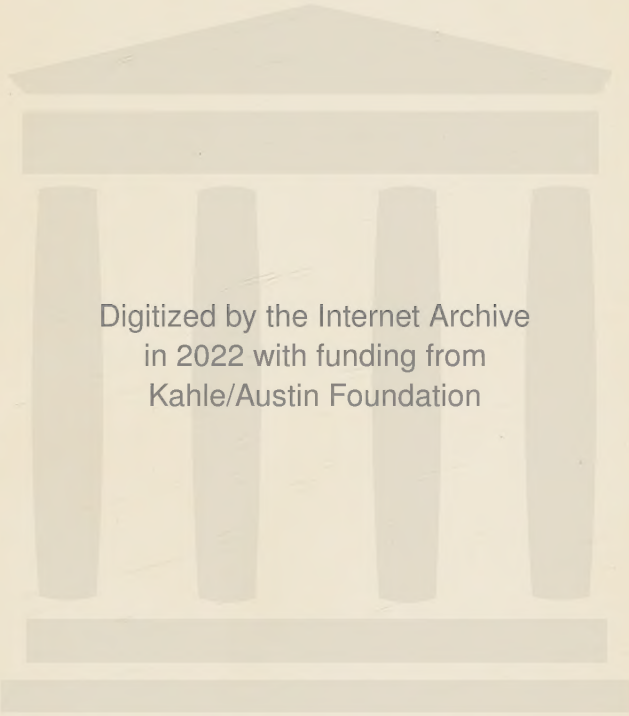
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AN ENQUIRY INTO THE EVIDENTIAL
VALUE OF PROPHECY



AN ENQUIRY
INTO THE
EVIDENTIAL VALUE OF
PROPHECY

BEING THE HULSEAN PRIZE ESSAY FOR 1904

BY

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WITH PREFACE BY THE

RT. REV. H. E. RYLE, D.D.

LORD BISHOP OF WINCHESTER

'Credo in Spiritum Sanctum qui locutus est per Prophetas'

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PREFACE.

IN the Rev. E. A. Edghill's book on *The Value of Prophecy*, I welcome a valuable addition to our literature of Biblical Theology on a side where the need of some such work has long been felt. He covers in his investigation the whole range of Old Testament prophecy, and evidently has a complete mastery of his materials. He seems to possess a scholarly knowledge both of the Hebrew text and of the Versions. In the discussion of the interpretation of many important passages he makes use of the best critical scholarship of the day, and at the same time is quite capable of taking an independent line.

The temper in which the book is written is that of a devout Biblical student. It is a work which will help many of us. Whether his conclusions always commend themselves or not, he has worked out his design with thoroughness and care, and has presented us with a treatment of his subject distinguished by great industry and warm sympathy.

That such a work should have been produced by a young Curate, amidst the heavy duties and continual distractions of work in a large town

parish, commands my admiration; and while it reflects credit upon the writer's resoluteness of purpose, it makes us hope that he will find encouragement for the continuance of his literary work.

HERBERT E. WINTON:

FARNHAM CASTLE, *March* 29, 1906.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

THE writer of the Hulsean essay is required to state in a preface the nature and extent of his obligations to other labourers in the same field. Accordingly a list is subjoined of the principal books consulted :

(1) COMMENTARIES.

On Old Testament :

Deuteronomy,	DRIVER.*	Jeremiah,	GIESEBRECHT.
Samuel,	DRIVER.	Ezekiel,	KRAETZSCHMAR.
Kings,	BURNEY.	Amos and Joel,	DRIVER.
Psalms,	PEROWNE.	Amos and Hosea,	HARPER.*
	KIRKPATRICK.	(This book appeared too	
	DELITZSCH.	late to be of any practical	
	BAETHIGEN.	use for this essay.)	
Job,	BUDDE.	Nahum, Habakkuk, Zeph-	
	DAVIDSON.	aniah,	DAVIDSON.
Isaiah,	CHEYNE.	The Twelve Prophets,	
Proverbs,	TOY.*	G. A. SMITH.	
Isaiah,	DELITZSCH.	NOWACK.	
	DILLMANN.	ORELLI.	
	DUHM.	Die Propheten des alten	
	SKINNER.	Bundes,	EWALD.
	G. A. SMITH.		

* Books marked with an asterisk occur in the series of *International Critical Commentaries* which are generally referred to in the notes as *I.C.C.*

On New Testament :

Gospel acc. St. Mark, SWETE.
 St. Luke, PLUMMER.*
 St. John, WESTCOTT.
 Acts of Apostles, KNOWLING.
 Romans, SANDAY and
 HEADLAM.*
 Galatians, LIGHTFOOT.

Corinthians, GODET.
 FINDLAY.
 Hebrews, WESTCOTT.
 1 Peter, HORT.
 ("A precious fragment.")
 Revelation, SIMCOX.

(2) HISTORICAL BOOKS.

Life and Times of Jesus the
 Messiah, EDELSHEIM.
 History of Israel, EWALD.
 History of the Hebrews,
 KITTEL.
 History of the Hebrews,
 OTTLEY.

Lectures on the Jewish
 Church, STANLEY.
 Prolegomena,
 WELLHAUSEN.
 Sketch of the history of
 Israel and Judah,
 WELLHAUSEN.

(3) BOOKS BEARING ON THE GENERAL SUBJECT.

The relevant articles in Hastings' Bible Dictionary.

Witness of Psalms to Chris-
 tianity and Christ,
 ALEXANDER.
 Messiah of the Gospels,
 BRIGGS.
 Messiah of the Apostles,
 BRIGGS.
 Der Israelitische Propheti-
 simus, CORNILL.
 Der leidende Messias,
 DALMAN.
 Old Testament Prophecy,
 DAVIDSON.
 Life and Times of Isaiah,
 DRIVER.
 Introduction to Literature of
 Old Testament, DRIVER,

Messianische Weissagungen,
 DELITZSCH.
 Die Theologie der Propheten,
 DUHM.
 On Prophecy, FAIRBAIRN.
 Fulfilled Prophecy,
 GOODE.
 Der Messianische Weissa-
 gungen, EUGEN HUHN.
 Doctrine of the Prophets,
 KIRKPATRICK.
 Weissagung und Profetie,
 KITTEL.
 Preparation in history for
 Christ, LUX MUNDI.
 The Hebrew Prophets,
 OTTLEY.

* See footnote, p. 111 / 112 / 113

BOOKS BEARING ON THE GENERAL SUBJECT--*Continued.*

Messianic Prophecy,	RIEHM.	The Old Testament in the	
		Jewish Church,	
Study of the Gospels,		ROBERTSON SMITH.	
ARMITAGE ROBINSON.		Das alte Testament im	
Inspiration,	SANDAY.	Neuen Testament,	
Modern Criticism and the		THOLUCK.	
Preaching of the Old		Die Vorexilische Jahwepro-	
Testament,	G. A. SMITH.	fetie und der Messias,	
Jewish and Christian Mes-		PAUL VOLZ.	
siah,	STANTON.	Introduction to Study of the	
Theology of the New Testa-		Gospels,	WESTCOTT.
ment,	STEVENS.	Grammar of New Testament	
The Prophets of Israel,		Greek (use of <i>iva</i> , etc.),	
ROBERTSON SMITH.		WINER.	

In addition to these books, I have occasionally consulted other works. The extent of my obligations to these will be found in the notes which I have attached wherever I am conscious of deliberate borrowing. I feel it, however, necessary to state that on more than one occasion I have reached conclusions independently of any of the works cited above—conclusions which, on the further prosecution of my studies, I was surprised and gratified to find, were often in general harmony, and occasionally in complete agreement with, the views expressed by some of these illustrious scholars.

With regard to the portions of this essay which I claim as original, I must frankly confess that all depends on the meaning to be attached to such a phrase. Originality in itself and for itself is the last quality to be desiderated in an interpreter of Holy Writ, especially in one toiling in a field on which so much labour has already been spent. Others have

laboured, we have entered into the fruits of their labours. To ignore the results which former scholars have achieved were madness. All that we can hope to do is to take these results, and appropriate them, and then to add our own contribution in the shape of a more convenient classification, or a reinforcement of established positions by fresh arguments derived from our own study of the prophetic word.

This I have attempted to do. While freely availing myself of the labours of others, I have never committed myself to any theory or position without carefully seeking its verification by independent study. The results thus attained, I have endeavoured to arrange in a systematic form, which, it is hoped, will enable the reader at once to discriminate between the temporary and permanent elements of prophecy, and at the same time to gain a clear and comprehensive survey of its leading characteristics and tendencies. As far as I am aware, this arrangement has not been adopted by any other writer on the subject, and, consequently, I feel justified in claiming as original in the sense which I have already attached to that word, the whole section on the three great conceptions of Hebrew prophecy.

The question of the fulfilment of prophecy has not received nearly the attention that it deserves. Riehm, it is true, devotes a third of his work, *Messianic Prophecy*, to "the relation of Messianic Prophecy to New Testament fulfilment," and Dr. Kirkpatrick closes his *Doctrine of the Prophets* with a most suggestive chapter on "Christ the Goal of Prophecy."

The late Professor Davidson, wherever he alludes to this branch of the subject, is illuminating and instructive. But the whole question yet awaits thorough examination in the light of recent criticism. Some attempts in this direction may be noted. Bishop Alexander's *Witness of the Psalms to Christianity and Christ* shows a wonderful combination of erudite scholarship and spiritual insight, but confessedly deals with only a limited portion of the subject, and is occasionally marred by a *petitio principii* and a somewhat unsatisfactory attitude towards critical theories, due, perhaps, to the apologetic and rhetorical standpoint he occupies. The book cannot, however, fail to be of great value to every Christian student of the Psalter. Very different is the volume entitled *Fulfilled Prophecy, a Proof of the truth of Revealed Religion*, by the late Dean Goode, which reappeared in a second edition in 1891. The author speaks with scorn of "German Neologians," followed by "a school in the Church of England," whose premises are, the writer imagines, of such a character that "they must either proceed to a formal denial of the Divine prescience and denude the Divine Being of one of His chief attributes, or they must give up their notion of the sanctity of the prophets and withdraw their respect from them. To speak respectfully of the prophets, while at the same time they undermine their authority, deny them the power they claim, and more than stultify their words, can only be accounted for on some hypothesis damaging to their reputation for common-sense or integrity." The value of a work written with such prepossessions is obvious. More successful is a little book

compiled by the late Professor Delitzsch,¹ with a frankly apologetic motive, but with a no less frank recognition of the right of reasonable criticism. Though professedly dealing with the *Messianic prophecies in historical sequence*, i.e. only as they occur in the Old Testament, the book has a distinct value for the interpretation of these prophecies in the light of New Testament fulfilment, a value which is, however, somewhat diminished by the author's avowedly apologetic tendencies. It will, therefore, be seen how desirable would be a history of fulfilment on the same broad lines—critical, historical, religious—as the numerous histories of prophecy. It has been my endeavour thoroughly to examine this part of the subject. My chief aids in this department have been a monograph by August Tholuck, and Westcott's magnificent commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews. Some of the discussions in Sanday and Headlam's edition of the Epistle to the Romans, and Lightfoot's commentaries, have also afforded me much valuable assistance, but this part for my dissertation is, in the main, original, both in conception and in detail, except where otherwise stated in the notes.

The English books to which I owe most for my treatment of this vast subject are Davidson's *Old Testament Prophecy*, Kirkpatrick's *Doctrine of the Prophets*, the splendid and stimulating works of W. R. Smith and G. A. Smith, and, in a different connection, Stanton's *Jewish and Christian Messiah*;

¹ "Der Wunsch beseelte mich, dem Institutum Judaicum das Compendium einer Concordia fidei, unseren Missionären ein Vademecum als Vermächtniss zu hinterlassen" (Vorwort).

of German works I have derived the greatest benefit from the impressive lectures of Cornill on "*The Prophecy of Israel*" to educated laymen, Dillmann's exhaustive commentary on Isaiah, Duhm's *Theologie der Propheten*, and a remarkable monograph by Paul Volz on "*die vorexilische Jahweprofetie und der Messias*." While almost invariably dissenting from his conclusions, I can truthfully affirm, that nothing I have read has made a greater impression on my mind. But the extravagance of his critical conclusions constitutes an unmistakeable warning to any who feel the temptation to emulate his ingenious originality.

It is, however, practically impossible to acknowledge all one's obligations in detail. In the course of prolonged study one unconsciously assimilates the thoughts and often the very words of many writers. I have taken the utmost pains to discover my indebtedness in every instance, but even so I am acutely conscious that whatever originality or worth this essay may possess is in reality due to my entering into the labour of others.

The last century has witnessed a remarkable revival in the study of those sacred writings which Christians have always accepted and revered as the lively oracles of God. Men have refused to be bound by traditional interpretations, and have claimed to take the very words of Scripture itself as the starting point for renewed investigation. Moreover, the unparalleled advances of Science in other directions suggested, even if they did not

demand, the application of strictly scientific methods to the study of all ancient literature, the propriety and necessity of such methods being intensified rather than diminished in dealing with writings of such unique importance as the books of our Canon, purporting as they do to be the organs of a supernatural revelation. Starting then with the demand that "the Bible should be treated in the same way as other books," the Higher Critics¹ refused to allow any *a priori* considerations as to the inspiration or authority of the books to deter them from a careful study of the literal and grammatical meaning of any passage under discussion, or from taking due account of the historical circumstances attending its composition. Thus Criticism so far from impugning or denying the Divine authority of the Bible has never professed to do more than deal with the purely human side of Biblical revelation.

At first argument was met by authority, but wiser counsels soon prevailed, and at the present day few indeed would be unwilling to concede that if "the Bible is authoritative because it is the Voice of God," it is yet "intelligible because it is in the language of men."²

The frank recognition of the human element in Scripture inevitably led to important modifications of the traditional view of supernatural inspiration. Many of the old positions were given up as no longer tenable, and it became incumbent upon the

¹ So called because the "Higher" criticism concerns itself with literary as opposed to textual problems.

² Westcott's *Introduction to Study of Gospels*.

defenders of the Faith to counteract the effects of destructive criticism by seeking to place their own beliefs on a wider and securer basis. In this connection nothing is more needed than a complete restatement of the Argument from prophecy. Until comparatively recent times prophecy and prediction were regarded as practically convertible terms. The prophet's office was to foretell rather than forthtell; the prophet's qualification was foresight rather than insight. Bishop Butler only expressed the views of an overwhelming majority of Christian scholars when he asserted that "prophecy is nothing but the history of events before they come to pass."¹ The evidential value of prophecy was supposed to consist in the exact correspondence of the historical event with the circumstantial prediction of its minutest details.² But now all is changed. "To the mind of the present day the evidential value of the Old Testament rests not merely or mainly on the fulfilment of specific and circumstantial prophecies but on the whole drift and tendency of a manifold and complex preparation in history, in life, in thought, pointing to an end which it foreshadowed but could not describe, for which it prepared, but which it could not produce."³ Some enquiry, therefore, into the nature and scope of the prophetic work and office forms an indispensable preliminary to the study of the evidential value of prophecy, for it is only thus that we shall gain a clear conception of the genesis

¹ Butler's *Analogy*, Part ii., c. vii.

² Goode, *Fulfilled Prophecy*, p. 152.

³ Kirkpatrick, *Doctrine of the Prophets*, p. x.

and growth of those great truths which underlie all Old Testament Revelation but to which prophecy gave a fresh and a deeper significance. In doing so it will be necessary to draw a careful distinction between the truths themselves and the dispensational and relative forms in which they find expression and embodiment. For the prophets, while enunciating Divine ideas, yet interpreted and adapted them to suit the varying needs of particular ages, and it is only by a careful investigation into the historical and political circumstances of the prophets' environment that we shall be able to discriminate between the temporary and permanent elements of prophetic revelation, and to gain a clear insight into the fundamental conceptions of Prophecy, and into the essential fulfilment they received in the New Testament; and this fulfilment is not merely by direct correspondence, nor solely through spiritual development, but by the marvellous combination of the divergent, almost contradictory, lines of thought of which different prophets were the exponents. For in not a few instances "Old Testament revelation falls into a self-contradiction from which only a miracle has been able to deliver us—the Incarnation of the Son of God."¹ When, therefore, we have endeavoured to ascertain the original meaning of the prophets, we shall be in a better position to appreciate the interpretation put upon their words by the New Testament writers. Their use of prophecy must in turn be submitted to careful enquiry, after which we shall have at our disposal sufficient materials for

¹ Orelli on Is. viii.

surveying the whole field, and forming a comprehensive judgment on the evidential value of prophecy.

There is no need to dread the results of candid research. As we ponder with reverent awe the age-long preparation for that "far off Divine event, to which the whole Creation moves," as we note with ever-increasing clearness the wonderful manifestation of Divine wisdom continuously displayed in the progressive education of Israel towards the apprehension of spiritual ideals, we become conscious of the gradual unfolding of a great providential plan revealed no less by the reticence than by the utterance of God: we begin to understand why it is that now this truth is enforced, now that—why one mode of expression is here employed, another there: we learn how the "many parts and many manners"—yet all tending in one direction and pointing to one goal—argue the presence of a mighty design, and point to the influence of Him who alone is able to convert this diversity into unity, alone able to weave the fragmentary and partial elements into one great connected whole, alone able to impress upon the varied contents of the prophetic writings the stamp of Divine authority and Divine revelation—even of Him who spake by the prophets, the holy and life-giving Spirit.

The quotations as a rule are taken from the Revised Version, but I have not scrupled to introduce occasional alterations where these seemed demanded in the interests of greater accuracy, or

with a view to bringing out more clearly the exact sense of any particular passage.

This book was written amid all the multitudinous activities and anxieties of a large suburban parish, of which no parish priest could possibly divest himself, despite the kindness and consideration of all concerned. It is obvious that a work produced under such circumstances cannot be free from the manifest defects arising from the circumstances of its composition. That these are not yet more glaring is due to the unbounded kindness of Dr. Ottley, Regius Professor of Pastoral Theology, and Canon of Christ Church, Oxford, who has imposed upon himself the labour of reading all the proofs, and making numerous suggestions which I have been only too thankful to adopt. To him therefore, as in duty bound, I gladly express my deep sense of gratitude for encouragement and wise advice.

It is a pleasant duty to acknowledge my indebtedness to all those who have lightened my labour and extended to me their sympathy in the production of this work. The Bishop of Winchester, in particular, has found time despite his onerous duties to read the book and contribute a preface, for which I am deeply grateful. To the friendly criticism of Canon Kennett, Regius Professor of Hebrew, Cambridge, I owe some valuable hints which I have incorporated into the earlier chapters. Mr. Dobbs, scholar of King's College, Cambridge, has most kindly compiled the indices.

In conclusion, the author asks to be permitted to express the hope that nothing he has said, or left unsaid, will give offence to any devout reader of

God's Holy Word. If he has written aught amiss, he would pray that it may be forgotten by men and forgiven by God. He himself can rise from his task to repeat, with strengthened conviction, the Church's declaration of faith unfeigned, "I believe in the Holy Ghost who spake by the Prophets."

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ERRATA.

- Page 13, line 4, *for* welfare *read* farewell.
- Page 167, Note 5, *for* lxv. 22, 23 *read* xlv. 22, 23.
- Page 182 f. Additional Note *for* Micah v. 1-4 *read* Micah iv. 1-4.
- Page 194, Note 1, should be marked in the text after "*Princes*" at end of line 2.
- Page 217. The quotation in the text should have reference in a note to Ps. lxxxix. 26, 27.
- Page 217. In footnote 1, *for* Col. i. 13 *read* Col. i. 15.
- Page 235, line 6, *for* *χριστόν* *read* *Χριστόν*.
- Page 264, Note 4, insert Jer. before xxxi. 32.
- Page 352, Note 3, *for* Ex. xxix. *read* Ex. xxix. 6.
- Page 394, line 10, *for* Ps. ix. 15 *read* Ps. ix. 16.
- Page 394, line 10, *for* Ps. xxix. 11 *read* Ps. xxix. 10.
- Page 395, line 11, *for* Ezra iv. *read* 4 Ezra.
- Page 395, line 20, *for* Ezra iv. 12-14 *read* 4 Ezra xii.-xiv.
- Page 452, line 5 from foot, *for* lxvii. 22 *read* lxviii. 22.
- Page 466, footnote, *for* Ps. xxii. 6 *read* Ps. xxii. 8.
- Page 546, line 1, *for* Gentles *read* Gentiles.
- Page 566, line 23, *for* Now the fact that *read* Now the fact of.
- Page 526, line 12, *for* Ps. lxxxix. 7, 8 *read* lxxxix. 5-7.
- Page 526, footnote 1, insert 'cf.' *before* Ps. lxviii. 35, 36.
- Page 568, footnote 2, *for* Hab. 3, 4 *read* Hab. ii. 3, 4.

PART I.

INTRODUCTORY.

§ I. INTRODUCTION.

“HISTORY is one in breadth as well as in length.”¹
The remark is just, and enters a much-needed protest against the common division of history into two independent sections—sacred and profane. It has long since been realized that a barren enumeration of dates and events interspersed by a pictorial representation of a selected number of the principal actors, does not constitute history in the true sense of the term. On the contrary, the historian must make careful provision for a scientific enquiry into the hidden causes that produced such obvious results; into the influences which moulded and controlled not only the political leaders, but also the classes whose traditions they inherited and whose interests they pledged themselves to defend, and finally into the origin and growth of the ideals from which they derived their inspiration and strength. That such principles should guide the historian in his task has been so universally recognized that they are

¹ Gwatkin, *Studies of Arianism*, p. I.

now regarded as axiomatic. But axioms, if exalted to a position of theoretical supremacy, are none the less frequently ignored or disregarded as practical inconveniences. And so it has come to pass that the "sacred" historian yet travels along a different path and in not a few instances finds himself arrived at a different destination from that of his brother historian who approaches the subject from the side of "profane" history.

This difference, this artificial separation, whatever be its practical advantages, leads to the most serious consequences, the full gravity of which can hardly yet be said to have been adequately appreciated. For while it is impossible to over-estimate the momentous influence of religious belief and practice upon all political movements, we must be no less careful to observe the permanent impression that historical circumstances and political institutions often stamp upon the outward form, and not infrequently upon the inner significance of a national religion.

The *Politeia*—in the extended sense in which Plato and Aristotle used the term—of a state, cannot be separated from its religion. The two forces, which we may conveniently summarize under the general term of religious and political ideals, cannot, and must not, be submitted to a process of arbitrary dissociation—a process which may be useful for the anatomical investigation of the *dissecta membra* thus exposed to our view, but which entirely obscures the comprehensive unity of true history.

For the relation between these vital forces is not one of independent parallelism; it is rather one of the closest inter-connection. Nor need we entertain

any fears that by the recognition of this principle we shall degrade religion from its lofty pre-eminence. Not only must religion not be divorced from secular history, but it is in such history that it finds at once its truest sphere, and its most reasonable explanation. A religion incapable of adaptation to historical requirements would, in point of fact, be practically valueless. Metaphysical speculations as to the Divine nature would not in themselves be sufficient to give courage to the conquered, or resolution to the oppressed. Revelation proceeds *pari passu* with the capacity of man to appreciate and assimilate the truths revealed—for the Author of revelation is the Controller of history, and He uses history as a preparation for the spiritual communications He is about to impart to those whom He has already prepared for their reception.

These principles are of universal application ; but in the history of one nation they receive an altogether peculiar illustration. In the Bible we possess an inspired record of the Divine dealings with the Jewish people. We see how the Jews were prepared by the providential dealings in history, no less than by a series of spiritual revelations, to accept the full treasures of the Christian dispensation. Christians have always been sensitive to the religious value of this long preparation, but it is only in comparatively recent years that the historical value has received its due consideration as furnishing the most striking indication of the Divine wisdom, by which alone the religion of the patriarchs was finally enabled to rise to the sublime consummation of prophetic monotheism.

We are enabled to trace the gradual unfolding of the Divine counsel as the nomadic horde becomes an army, the army becomes a nation, the nation becomes a church—and at each step of this historical development, men are raised up to proclaim the corresponding spiritual truths.

There is a law of progress which holds good in the spiritual as in the natural world—a law of whose existence and working the Saviour spoke when He likened the kingdom of God to the automatic nature of the soil.¹ This law is the determining principle of religious revelation. Elementary truths must first be learnt before an advance can be made to the higher doctrines of a purer creed.

As in nature the seed contains in itself the vital principle of all that in the course of months or years or ages will at length attain to its final perfection: as we may thus assert the identity and homogeneity of the original seed with the mature plant, without by such recognition ignoring the manifold changes effected by the processes of germination, growth, development, consummation—so we may freely concede that not only did Christianity itself spring out of the roots of Judaism, but the Jewish religion, in its turn, did not suddenly appear as an arbitrary violation of this universal principle, but was in itself a remarkable instance of that gradual growth and working which is not confined to the Divine operations in the kingdom of nature, but is as strikingly manifested in the kingdom of grace.

The grand and imposing religion of later Jewish prophecy sprang from a humble beginning; its

¹ Mark iv. 26-29.

sublime monotheism from a strictly limited conception of the Godhead, its magnificent universalism from a narrow nationalism and particularism. And so far from detracting from the true inspiration of the sacred writings by pointing to the humble origin of their highest thoughts, it is by this very means that we may establish the strongest argument for the supernatural character of the revelation they profess to record. Admitting that the earliest religion of Israel differed but slightly from the religion of their Semitic neighbours, we ask, whence this marvellous growth? Whence this unparalleled expansion? By what force did the beliefs of this petty kingdom vanquish the religion of mighty empires? or survive the overthrow and dissolution of state and temple? or resist all the disintegrating forces of captivity and exile? How was the national deity of the Hebrews enabled to transcend all national limitations and claim the universal homage of mankind? The original similarity of the Hebrew to other Semitic religions constitutes in itself one of the strongest proofs of the working of the Divine power, by which alone the prophets were subsequently enabled to effect such a fundamental difference, a difference which it seems impossible to explain satisfactorily upon any other hypothesis.

For without the prophets any such development would have been impossible. The prophets were by no means exclusively concerned with the future. Their chief work and their main interests lay in the present. For just as religion developed with the growth of the state, so prophecy—the noblest fruit of the Jewish religion—was never out of touch

with events. But this fact—which alone made the prophet's words intelligible to his first hearers—constitutes precisely the difficulty that makes them almost unintelligible to ordinary readers of the present day.¹

The prophecies relating to the destinies of various nations, however, are such as cannot be adequately appreciated without a full discussion of the dates at which they were composed, while they involve the equally serious question as to whether they may not have received alteration or adaptation at the hands of later generations who may have wished to make them suit more exactly the circumstances of their own day. In view, therefore, of the great uncertainty attaching to prophecies of this nature, it seems the wiser course to abstain from citing them as witnesses for the evidential value of prophecy, and to restrict ourselves to a thorough examination of the great prophetic Hope, the glorious advent of the kingdom of God upon earth, culminating in the Person of the promised Messiah.

It is to these two great lines of thought that our attention is specially directed by New Testament writers when they claim that Christ has fulfilled in

¹ Cf. Cornill, *Der Israelitische Prophetismus*, p. 2. "Der Israelitische Prophetismus ist eine durchaus geschichtliche Erscheinung, zu dessen wirklichem Verständniss eine vollständige und genaue Kenntniss der Israelitischen Religions- und Profangeschichte gehört: eine vollständige und genaue Kenntniss der israelitischen Religionsgeschichte um beurtheilen zu können was dasjenige das uns als selbstverständlich erscheint in Munde dessen und zur Zeit dessen bedeutete der es zuerst ausgesprochen; und eine vollständige und genaue Kenntniss der Israelitischen Profangeschichte um die Verhältnisse zu verstehen unter denen und in denen sie wirkten und auf welche ihre Wirkung berechnet war."

His teaching and in His Person *the promises made before to the fathers*. And as we trace these two golden threads gleaming through centuries of prophetic activity, appearing and re-appearing in the works of men of the most diverse temperaments, writing under the most diverse circumstances, we instinctively claim a *Divine origin* for this magnificent hope, springing up in times of darkest distress, in times when national sin with its inevitable shadow, national punishment, was eloquent only of despair; we cannot fail to see a *Divine plan* in the wonderful adaptation of different portions of this glorious truth to the temporal and spiritual needs of different ages; we marvel at the *Divine power*, enabling this conviction of ultimate triumph to surmount all difficulties and survive all dangers—and noting these three characteristics, a Divine origin, a Divine plan, a Divine power, we shall be prepared to admit the reality of the revelation contained *in the sure word of prophecy*, and shall readily assent to the proposition that *the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost*.¹

§ II. EARLY PROPHECY IN RELATION TO THE STATE.

Ewald, in sketching the design of his *History of Israel*, remarks that “every ancient nation chose one special aim to which everything else was subordinated, and to whose attainment it devoted the

¹2 Peter i. 21.

whole youthful energy of its intellectual efforts with the most courageous pertinacity," and he further proceeds to point out that in Israel "this aim is perfect religion. The aim was lofty enough to concentrate the efforts of a whole people for more than a thousand years, and however much the mode of pursuit might vary, it was this single object that was always pursued ; so that there is hardly any history of equal compass that possesses in all its phases and variations so much intrinsic unity, and is so closely bound up to a single thought so pertinaciously held, but always developing itself, to a higher purity."

Such then was the aim to the pursuit of which Israel applied herself, and prophecy was the power which enabled the nation consistently to devote herself to the attainment of this great object. For if prophecy must not be limited to the writings of the canonical prophets, it is equally erroneous to suppose that it only began to exercise an influence upon the national life and development when Elijah stood forth as the champion of Jehovah, or when Samuel began to encourage, if indeed he did not actually institute, the prophetic schools.

Even before that time—as was recognized by the writers of a later age—the Jewish people might be called a prophetic nation. For prophecy implies mediation—mediation between God and man—and wherever the fact of revelation, with the responsibilities it involved, was even dimly apprehended, there we have the ultimate significance of prophecy. For the Jews were not entrusted with a clearer knowledge of the Divine for their own sake, but merely as the agents for diffusing this knowledge throughout

humanity. The Divine selection involved a Divine purpose,¹ for it is through a few chosen vessels that God *will have all men to be saved and brought to a knowledge of the truth.*²

The Jews then, if they were called to know Jehovah, were not expected to keep this knowledge as a private possession for their own advantage; rather they were called to be the representatives of all nations in respect to their true relation to God; in other words, the Jews were the prophets of humanity.

Now this ideal was recognized by subsequent thinkers. Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, is called by God "a prophet" to Abimelech the king of the Philistines. *He is a prophet and he shall pray for thee and thou shalt live.*³ And the Psalmist, speaking of the patriarchs, calls them, with an allusion to this passage, by the same name. *Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm.*⁴ And similarly wherever we have this idea of revelation communicated to special men, or to a special nation, by them to be mediatorially handed on to others, there we have the substance if not the name of prophecy. This ultimate regeneration of humanity through the instrumentality of a specially chosen and specially prepared instrument is the cardinal fact of all Old Testament revelation; and realizing the paramount importance of this ideal we are enabled to account for the chief characteristics of Old Testament prophecy.

We must, however, observe how these principles found outward expression, and, to do so, it will

¹ Rom. ix. 11, *ἡ κατ' ἐκλογὴν πρόθεσις τοῦ Θεοῦ.* ² 1 Timothy ii. 4.

³ Genesis xx. 7 (attributed to E.).

⁴ Psalm cv. 15.

become necessary briefly to trace the history of prophecy (itself so intimately connected with the history of the State) to the rise of the canonical prophets whose writings we still possess.

We do not read of prophets—with the exception of Deborah—until the time of Samuel, but there can be little doubt that they existed before his time. Moses was regarded as a prophet, and so he is represented as speaking of himself. *A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up, like unto me.*¹ And, according to the true idea of prophecy, he is rightly so designated. For Moses was the instrument by which God chose to make His will known to the Jewish people. It was He who led them *by the hand of Moses*.² It was He who inaugurated a covenant *by the hand of a mediator*³—that is through Moses. And so the Deuteronomist rightly sums up the achievements of Moses as the work of a *prophet raised up by Jehovah*—and Hosea can say *By a prophet the Lord brought Israel out of Egypt*.⁴

But it seems equally clear that the prophetic office did not cease with Moses, for Hosea continues, *And by prophets was he preserved*; while the whole point of the prediction of Moses in the passage already cited lies not in the hope that God will in the distant future raise up a particular individual prophet like Moses, but in the assurance that He will from time to time provide for the emergencies and exigencies of national life by the continuance and permanence of the prophetic order.⁵ To this agree also the words of Jeremiah: *Since*

¹ Deut. xviii. 15. ² Ps. lxxviii. 3. ³ Gal. iii. 19. ⁴ Hos. xii. 13.

⁵ Cf. Driver on Deut. xviii. in *International Critical Commentary*.

*the day that your fathers came forth out of the land of Egypt unto this day, I have sent unto you all my servants the prophets, daily rising up early and sending them.*¹

One such instance is preserved to us in the case of the prophetess Deborah, who in the name of Jehovah rallied the northern tribes against the oppressor and achieved their freedom.² And a somewhat similar instance of complete dedication to Jehovah's service is found in Samson the Nazirite³—for even in the time of Amos, Nazirite and prophet were classed together.⁴ We may therefore safely assume that the succession of prophets continued in Israel as a regular institution till the age of Samuel. This is borne out by the story of his call, for the statement that *vision was scarce in Israel*⁵ is almost meaningless if we suppose that vision had not been vouchsafed at all from the time of Moses onwards.

But with Samuel a great change takes place. We hear of *companies of the prophets* who appear to be characterized by much religious fervour and excitement. Samuel, himself a prophet, is looked up to by these bands as their natural head, and everything points to the fact that he himself strongly encouraged the movement. But what was the cause of this sudden outburst of religious zeal? When we reflect how inextricably religion and nationality were bound up together, it seems natural to look for an explanation in some crisis of national life. And such is not

¹ Jer. vii. 25. ² Judges v. vi.

³ Judges xiii.-xvi. But the Nazirite may have been originally rather the consecrated warrior. ⁴ Amos ii. 10. ⁵ 1 Sam. iii. 2.

far to seek, as the same causes were already operative in another direction which led to no less important consequences.

The people of Israel had for long been crushed under Philistine oppression, while the utterly disorganized condition of their government seemed to invite further encroachments on the part of their jealous and warlike neighbours. At last, however, the spirit of national independence, combined with a fresh zeal for the national religion, asserted itself, and the union of these two forces resulted in an event the importance of which it is impossible to over-estimate.

Two accounts of the establishment of the monarchy are extant. They are characterized by two entirely different views as to the religious aspect of the transaction.

The first and oldest account¹ represents Saul as anointed king by Samuel for the purpose of defending Israel against the Philistines, and as bidden to do *as his hand may find*. Saul does so, wins a great victory over the Ammonites, and is made king at Gilgal by the people with acclamation.

Very different is the second account.² The people ask for a king in consequence of the misrule of Samuel's sons. The request is most displeasing to God, but nevertheless He directs Samuel to do as they wish. Saul is therefore chosen by lot as king, and Samuel makes a farewell speech, in which he once more condemns the wickedness of their action.

That the second narrative is the later, and also

¹ 1 Sam. ix. 1-x. 16, x. 27b-xi. 15.

² 1 Sam. viii., x. 17-27a, xii.

historically the less trustworthy, appears not only from the view of the monarchy which clearly betrays the disappointment of a later age, but also by a curious slip in the account of Samuel's ~~welfare~~ *farewell* to the people.¹

It is to the first account therefore that we go, if we would discern the real meaning of the institution of the kingship in Israel.

We find then that the idea of kingship originated with Samuel, who regarded his command to anoint Saul as a direct revelation from God. The kingship thus inaugurated through the representative of the prophets is brought into still closer connection with the prophetic order by the "sign" which Saul experienced in his meeting with the prophets. The anointed king himself receives the spirit of prophecy, and his martial prowess is also directly attributed to the same spirit.

We thus see that the monarchy, so far from being opposed to the prophetic ideal, commended itself to the religious consciousness of the nation, and the writer of the appendices to Judges,—written as were all the historical books from a prophetic standpoint—looks back with horror to the time when *there was no king in Israel*.²

But how are we to interpret the second account? It is usually taken to express the most emphatic disapprobation of the new kingship. *They have*

¹ Samuel himself is included in the list of judges to whom he appeals in proof of Jehovah's care for Israel. The speech seems "to have been expanded by a later editor who has forgotten that it is Samuel himself who is speaking." Driver on 1 Sam. xii. 11.

² Judges, xvii.-xxi.

not rejected thee, but me, is the Divine answer to Samuel's complaint. The institution of the monarchy is, we are told, a sad declension from the theocratic ideal.¹ That it was not so to the earliest thinkers is clear from the first account which has been preserved. But it is extremely doubtful whether even the second writer, who throws back into his reading of past history the gloomy disillusionment caused by the degeneracy and failure of the monarchy in his own day, intended to represent the kingship as totally opposed to the Divine rule in Israel. It was not so much that the people put their faith in the kingship rather than in God, but that the Israelites, who had been trained to look to Jehovah for deliverance, imagined that they could be relieved from their distress by any political methods whatsoever. The Israelites ceased to have faith in God when they imagined that the appointment of a king or the establishment of any institution would effect the "salvation" for which they looked. They had, in fact, transferred their allegiance from Jehovah to their own methods, and it was the recognition of this fact which moved the second prophetic historian to pronounce an unqualified condemnation of the whole transaction.

As a matter of fact the kingship, so far from destroying the theocratic ideal, had exactly the opposite effect. The king chosen by Jehovah,

¹ Kirkpatrick, *Books of Samuel, Cambridge Bible for Schools*, pp. 26, 27, "material and political" as opposed to "spiritual and religious"; "inevitable retrogression"; "the sovereignty of a visible monarch was a declension from the ideal of the Theocracy." Cf. Riehm, *Messianic Prophecy*, p. 104, "an externalizing and materializing."

anointed by His prophet, ruling as His representative and by His sanction, brought home to the people much more forcibly than ever before the idea of the incessant watchfulness of Jehovah over the state, and the interest He took in all that concerned its government and foreign relations.

The history of Saul shows us how extremely sensitive the people still were to the true kingship of Jehovah. His tragic fate was due to his self-will, and to his failure to recognize that as king of Israel he was bound to follow another will, the will of Him who was Israel's true king, from whom he derived his kingship and as whose representative he held the reins of government. In true prophetic style he is warned by Samuel of his rejection :

*Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings
and sacrifices,
As in obeying the voice of the Lord?
Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice,
And to hearken than the fat of rams.
Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord,
He hath also rejected thee from being king.¹*

The death of Saul was not the signal for the prophetic party to revive the old *régime* of "theocratic" anarchy. Another had already been anointed by Samuel to take his place, and favoured by priests and prophets David ascended the vacant throne.

We have seen how close was the connection between prophecy and the monarchy, and this connection became cemented yet more closely during the reign of David. He was not the mediæval saint that he has been sometimes pictured,

¹ 1 Sam. xv. 22, 23.

but yet he was *a man after God's own heart*.¹ If he sinned, he yet showed repentance true and deep; while the glory of his reign, the union of the tribes under one strong government, the victories he achieved over foreign nations, the peace which his conquests enabled him to establish, the solemn entry of the ark into Jerusalem, all combined to produce an impression upon his own contemporaries which the lapse of ages served only to enhance. In days of distress and sorrow the glory of the Davidic age shone forth with a yet brighter lustre, and men in despair of the present looked back with regretful pride to the reign which the reflection of their own aspirations had still further idealized. But yet, making every allowance for the exaggerated reverence of posterity, David's reign was of profound importance both from a historical and from a religious point of view.

Politically his greatest achievement was the creation of Judah and Jerusalem, and the amalgamation of the tribes into a united kingdom. But his influence on the religious feeling of the time was even greater.

In the first place stood the character of the king. He was recognized as being a man after God's heart—that is to say, as one who fulfilled the true idea of theocratic kingship. Ruling in Jehovah's name he subordinated his own predilections to Jehovah's will. In this way the rule of Jehovah in Israel was felt far more widely and deeply than had been possible in previous ages. Such an idea naturally reacted on the ideal of kingship, and invested the monarchy with

¹ אִישׁ כְּלִבִּי may mean no more than "a man to my liking," and may always be spoken with reference to a definite contingency.

all the weight of religious sanction. But conversely it was only the character of the king that made such a conception possible.

David's reign and character presented an imperishable ideal, which became firmly rooted in the religious consciousness of the nation. It was in itself a living witness to the possibility of a kingdom of God among men, which then formed the most important element in the hope of Israel. But it was not so much the kingdom as the *Davidic* kingdom which kindled the enthusiasm of the prophets. For in any scheme of Divine redemption, character—that is to say, moral qualifications—must necessarily play a most conspicuous part; and so when the prophets picture the final establishment of the Divine kingdom, they also introduce to us a representation of the ideal king, who is nearly always portrayed on the lines suggested by the character of David. Sometimes it is true Jehovah Himself rules directly in Zion, and the human king is lost sight of. He is but the representative of the true Ruler, the Mighty One of Israel, and when the latter reigns there is no need for His earthly representative; but it may be questioned if even this conception would have been possible had not men's minds been familiarized with the idea of a perfect mediation of Jehovah's government through the human king anointed to be His vicerent.

It is therefore to the reign of David that we must look, if not for the origin of the Messianic hope, at any rate for the growth and association of ideas which led men to the expectation of a kingdom of God on earth; and it is largely to the character of

David that we must attribute the conception of a king ruling in righteousness, and endowed with Jehovah's spirit to act as Jehovah's representative.

There are some further points in the historical circumstances of this period which, while not originating any new ideas, yet had no little influence in colouring the form in which the greater hope became finally invested.

(i.) First we must notice the establishment of the ark in Jerusalem, which thus became the spiritual as well as the political centre of national life. For, though it seems hardly open to question that the high places were tolerated for a much longer period, yet the superior holiness of the sanctuary in Zion, brought into still greater prominence from the time of Solomon, did not fail to suggest to pious minds the perpetual presence of God with His people, and as a natural corollary the inviolability of Jerusalem—ideas which constitute so conspicuous a feature in the writings of the literary prophets, who could never bring their minds to believe in a final abandonment of Zion by Him who had dwelt so long in His holy hill.

(ii.) Secondly, the union of the tribes under a single ruler acted as a powerful stimulus to the realization of Israel's position as a nation, and of her national responsibilities.

Even a superficial study of Israel's history reveals the fact that the nation was composed of the most heterogeneous elements, which in the earliest stages of national existence gave evident tokens of their incompatible nature; and which, after a brief union under David and his successors, once more proved

their inability to coalesce into a permanent whole by the disruption of the kingdom.

But the feeling that Israel as a nation had a call, a definite task which Jehovah had set her to accomplish in the earth, was, if not expressed, at any rate developed and matured when the nation, united under one ruler and strong in the confidence which a sense of unity alone can inspire, braced itself to the fulfilment of those duties, and to the solution of those problems which the progress of civilization had rendered particularly pressing.

Thus the ideal unity of Israel—the true unity of the people of God—which David achieved, remained one of the most cherished thoughts of prophetic literature, and so firm and abiding was the belief in the ultimate realization of this ideal in spite of all appearances to the contrary, that even in Christian times the apostle of the Gentiles,¹ and a preacher² little given to metaphor, still speak of the twelve tribes of Israel no less than the apostle of the circumcision and the Christian prophet;³ for the expression of the truth underlying this belief in these very terms was sanctioned by the Master Himself.⁴

(iii.) But there is yet another characteristic of the Davidic era which left a permanent mark upon the ideals and hopes which the prophets sought to enlarge and purify.

David first brought the Israelitish kingdom into real contact with the surrounding nations. He founded an empire as well as a kingdom. The

¹ Acts xxvi. 7.

² St. James i. 1.

³ Rev. vii. 4.

⁴ Mat. xix. 28.

subjugation of the petty kingdoms around Israel naturally suggested imperial ideas, which were fostered by the Oriental magnificence and foreign alliances of Solomon. It is true that it was not till Israel was brought into collision with the world-powers of Assyria and Babylon that any idea of universality entered into the conception of the kingdom of God, but there seems no reason to doubt that the circumstances of David's reign first suggested the idea of Israel being as it were the head of a great spiritual confederacy—an idea which we find expressed with so much force and beauty in what may very likely be the earliest prophecy preserved in literary form.¹

(iv.) But this empire, if won by the sword, was established by peace—peace at any rate was the result of conquest—and the peace which marked the closing years of David's reign furnished so remarkable a contrast to the interminable warfare of that rude and barbarous age, that it sank deep into the minds of men, and directed their thoughts to the “coming days,” as inaugurating what was essentially an era of tranquillity and peace.

The reign of David may therefore be justly considered as the starting point for the more developed hopes and aspirations relative to the Messianic age which meet us in all the prophets. For though “the Messianic hope had its roots” in the faith that Israel stood in a special relation to Jehovah, and may consequently be said “to begin from God's covenant with Abraham”;² or taking an even wider view, we may find its origin in the idea of the

¹ Is. ii. 1-4.

² Stanton, *Jewish and Christian Messiah*, p. 100.

moral relation of mankind to God, and trace its commencement to the Divine promise of the ultimate victory of humanity recorded in Genesis iii., yet few will be found to deny that an immense step forward was taken when men began to reflect upon the religious and historical circumstances of the united kingdom. It does not follow that their true bearings were apprehended by David's contemporaries, though it is possible that the more religious minds might even then have seen somewhat of their inner significance. But we may assert with confidence that the reign of David, followed by that of Solomon, gave a fixed colouring to the fundamental conceptions of prophecy, even if we cannot look to this source for a complete explanation of their essential character.

Thus the idea of God's rule among men found permanent embodiment in the idea of a kingdom, while the character of David suggested the necessary qualification for the ideal king. The presence of God with men, the unity of the people of God, the universality of the new empire, and its peaceful character—ideas, which lying at the roots of all prophetic thought, yet receive such varied treatment and different emphasis from individual prophets—all may trace their genesis to the time when David established the ark in Jerusalem as the religious centre of a united kingdom, and after a strenuous life of warfare and struggle, subdued the nations round about and established peace in all the borders of Israel.

But the hope was to take a yet more definite shape. The prophet Nathan was commissioned to

bear a most remarkable message to David which, if embodied in a form somewhat expanded from that in which it was actually uttered, nevertheless appears accurately to represent all the main features of the original promise. David in his old age is comforted by the assurance that he is destined to become the father of a line of kings who shall walk before God for ever, the representatives of a people that is itself a royal priesthood, the visible mediators of the Divine Theocracy, constituting in themselves the pledges of the ultimate fulfilment of the glorious promises and ideals of the Davidic reign.

We have seen how intimately connected were the political and religious movements in early Israel. The state was a unit. It had no religious organization whose life and aims were different from its own. The nation of Israel actually was the kingdom of God, the sphere in which Jehovah exercised His kingly functions, administering justice in time of peace, and leading His armies to battle in time of war. And hence, though the government might be mediated through prophet, priest, judge, or king, it was Jehovah who was the real ruler, and it was from Him alone that any ruler derived his power and authority. In such a state of affairs, it is obvious that no political act could fail to be without some religious significance, for the institutions of Israel are in no sense to be regarded as the outcome of a fortuitous concatenation of external circumstances, but rather as designed to provide a permanent embodiment for those principles which had already taken deep root in the national consciousness. These principles it was the duty of Israel's religious leaders—

the prophets—to foster and develop. They might indeed find no outward expression for a time, but there they were, nevertheless, and directly an opportunity was offered, they at once found their natural embodiment in the various institutions with which we are familiar. But there was no arrested development at this stage. The mass of the people, it is true, might, and often did, form quite erroneous views as to the real significance of their religious and political institutions, but this only rendered it the more imperatively necessary, if the true idea was to be conserved, that men should arise who should set themselves to correct the false deductions and prejudices of popular aspirations, and to examine in the light of Israel's history, and the character of Jehovah, God of Israel, which that history revealed, the true meaning and exact value of all those various forms of government and religion by which they found themselves surrounded. In so doing, the prophets were often led to develop yet further thoughts, of which we can only discern the faintest hints in the writings of their predecessors. For there was no stagnation. Old truths called for fresh application in the altered circumstances of another age. What seemed—and was—of paramount importance to the prophets of one century, is at times ignored, minimized, or even contradicted by later prophets, who found it necessary to emphasize a different aspect of the truth.

The prophets, therefore, “one and all, stand in an intimate relation to the history of their times,”¹ and in relation to those events they had a double duty

¹ Driver, *Life and Times of Isaiah*, p. 31.

to perform. In the first place, by preaching and teaching they had to prepare the nation for such changes as were imminent. For instance, as has been well pointed out,¹ had not Amos become convinced of the universal righteousness of Jehovah, the advance of Assyria would have presented itself to him as a paralysing problem. Similarly, had not the prophets persistently declared that national sin inevitably entailed national punishment, and that God's supreme holiness must be vindicated, even if it resulted in the extinction of the Jewish State, we may well be permitted to doubt whether the religion of Israel could ever have survived the captivity and exile. But the prophets had a second duty to perform. It was not sufficient by the enunciation of great religious principles to prepare the minds of their contemporaries to welcome or withstand the changes and chances of their political environment before the event took place—they were also called upon to explain each phase of national life and experience as it actually occurred. Thus all the prophets of the eighth century proclaimed the inevitableness of the punishment which the Lord would not turn away²—in fact they predicted the exile; but it remained for a Jeremiah or an Isaiah, living amid the actual circumstances of the captivity, to interpret the spiritual significance of the situation to their disheartened contemporaries: or again, while one of Isaiah's earliest and deepest convictions found expression in the doctrine that the rejection of Israel would not be final or irremediable, but that *a remnant would return to the Mighty God*³—while in

¹ G. A. Smith, *The Twelve Prophets*, i. 51. ² Amos i. 2. ³ Is. x. 21.

fact the certainty of a restoration was almost a commonplace of all subsequent prophecy, it was yet reserved for a Haggai or Zechariah, or the prophet of the exile, to promulgate the lessons of hope and warning which Jehovah intended to impress upon the people by the actual circumstances of the historical return from Babylon. Now, these instances are by no means isolated examples—rather they are illustrations, almost universally applicable, of the general working of this double function of prophecy. For prophecy was not merely a providential preparation for that which was to come, but it also furnished a spiritual commentary on the events for which it had itself prepared. “To the prophets there are no such things as mere events; all events are embodiments and illustrations or exhibitions of moral principles.”¹

Now, there is no event in the whole history of Israel in connection with which we can trace so clearly this double operation of prophetic activity as the establishment of the monarchy. Had it not been for the preparatory office of prophecy, the appointment of a king could only have issued, as the historian feared might still be possible in his own day,² in the assimilation of Israel to the surrounding nations. But the earlier prophets had succeeded in impressing the people with so real a belief in the absolute sovereignty of Jehovah that the inauguration of the monarchy was attended with very different results—while the kingship, when once established, furnished the prophets with a theme for endless variation on the great ideals and glorious

¹ Davidson, *Old Testament Prophecy*, 393.

² I Samuel viii. 11-18.

destiny of the kingdom of God, and of the sovereign appointed by Jehovah to bear rule over His chosen people.

Some of these ideals suggested by the reign and character of David we have already indicated, but it is important to observe how now one, now another is brought by individual prophets into relation with the circumstances of their own time. For, as we have repeatedly pointed out, the prophet's first message was directed to his own contemporaries.

Now, it is no exaggeration to say that the history of Israel centred in the history of her kings. The king had practically complete control over all domestic administration, while the foreign policy of the country appears to have been entirely in his hands. It is therefore plain how intensely important was the attitude of the king who sat upon the throne to those theocratic ideals of which the prophets were the authorized exponents. In every political combination the character of the reigning prince was an element of preponderating significance. Would he, or would he not, be true to those principles which the prophets felt themselves commissioned to utter? The answer to this question was of the profoundest import, for on it depended not only the fortune of the royal house, but very frequently also the fate of the whole people. Moreover, the conduct of the king in regard to religious matters could not be viewed as the isolated action of an irresponsible individual. He was in a sense the head of the nation in its religious no less than its political aspect. He was, as it were, the representative of the nation before God, and as such his acts could be regarded as the acts

of the people over whom he ruled. His religious tendencies, also, could not fail to exercise the most widespread influence among his subjects, and consequently the ecclesiastical or religious policy of the king was of even greater moment than his foreign alliances or internal government.

Now, the prophets were fully aware that principles are useless if incapable of application, and so they set themselves to apply to the test of actual life those spiritual conceptions which they had either formed for themselves or inherited from a previous generation. They were always on the watch for anything in which they could discern Jehovah's voice speaking to them of His work or of His counsel. The history of those days must have seemed perplexing to many earnest minds. It was indeed difficult to discern anything Divine amid the interminable warfare of the petty nationalities that made up the Semitic world. But to the prophets the problem presented no insuperable difficulties, because in everything they recognized Jehovah—not only the Holy One, but also *the* Sovereign Lord; not only God of Israel and Judah, but also God of Moab and Philistia, Edom and Damascus, Who in the midst of all this turmoil was accomplishing *His strange work that he had determined upon the whole earth*. Everything was attributable to Him, evil as well as good.¹ For *shall evil befall a city and Jehovah have not done it?*²

And further, the prophets were not left alone to interpret the various phenomena as best they could

¹ We should remember that in the Hebrew Bible evil is almost always physical evil.

² Amos iii. 6.

by their own unaided efforts. For *Jehovah himself doth not anything but he revealeth his secret to his servants the prophets.*¹ Jehovah Himself speaks to them, yea *in their very ears*, and by word or vision in the great events of history or the circumstances of domestic life enables the prophet to know and declare His purpose.

So to the prophets nothing was purposeless, and we can imagine with what anxiety and interest they would await any exhibition of Jehovah's righteousness or power. The prophets could not ever afford to be indifferent to the great political movements all around them. Every victory or defeat, every catastrophe or success, every battle or alliance, was merely a part of the great drama of the working out of Jehovah's purpose on the stage of universal history.

And if the prophets could not ignore or despise the fortunes of other countries, how could they for a moment neglect to immerse themselves in the affairs of their own nation, which knew Jehovah *not as the heathen who have no knowledge of his laws*, and which Jehovah Himself *knew above all the families of the earth?*² To them no occurrence could be without a deep religious significance. The accession of a new monarch was accompanied with untold possibilities for good or ill. Physical calamities in time of peace, or national disaster in time of war, all had their spiritual counterpart; and the prophet ceased to be a prophet directly he failed to take cognizance of any such matters. Consequently we cannot be surprised at the political character of

¹ Amos iii. 7. ² Ps. cxlvii. 20; Amos iii. 2.

prophecy, or at the extent to which the prophets directed their attention to the conduct and character of the successive kings with whom they came in contact.

How largely this was the case may be seen from the most cursory examination of Israelitish history. It was the prophet Samuel who anointed Saul, and also in Jehovah's name *rejected him from being king over Israel* and anointed another to take his place. David justified the hopes of the theocratic party by attaching to himself the two prophets Nathan and Gad, to whose advice he was always ready to defer. It was to the influence of the prophetic and priestly party that Solomon owed his elevation to the throne; and again it was a prophet who, in the last days of his reign, foretold and accelerated the disruption of the kingdom. Ahijah's work was not done when he called Jeroboam to assume the leadership in Israel. The king did not rise to a true conception of his office, and the aged prophet was commissioned to denounce the monarch whom he had been instrumental in placing upon the throne. Nor was Jeroboam's religious policy allowed to pass unchallenged. The young prophet came from Judah, (as did Amos on a later occasion), to "prophecy" against the altar which the king had set up at Bethel—an incident which shows that the prophets were not wont to confine their attention exclusively to the affairs of their own country. Meanwhile in the southern kingdom Rehoboam had been twice warned by Shemaiah in regard to his wars with Israel and Egypt; while the reformation of Asa was assisted by Azariah the son of Oded, and apparently by

Oded himself. Hanani was sent to rebuke him for his faithless alliance with Syria; while his son Jehu predicted the fall of Baasha in the north, and at a later date rebuked Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, for his league with the idolatrous kings of Israel.

It is indeed just at this period when two powerful kings were reigning over Israel and Judah that we find the prophets coming into very special prominence. Ahab, king of Israel, pursued a definite policy in both religious and civil matters, which brought him into violent collision with the theocratic or prophetic party, who now found a champion in the person of Elijah. At home he attempted to set up a despotism which he sought to strengthen by foreign alliances. The latter brought him into contact with foreign religions, and though he himself seems to have remained firm to his allegiance to Jehovah,¹ he nevertheless favoured a policy of toleration in religious matters which, in those days, could not have failed to have resulted in a religious syncretism entirely opposed to the principles of the religion of Jehovah. But Ahab found himself opposed on all points by Elijah, who appeared as the uncompromising champion of popular rights, and of the absolute supremacy of Jehovah. Elijah was not the only prophet who stood forth to frustrate the royal policy. The nameless prophet who rebuked his ill-timed clemency to Syria, and Micaiah, son of Imlah, who had for long prophesied not good but evil concerning Ahab, were probably but representatives of those hundred prophets whom Obadiah had sheltered from the wrath of Jezebel,

¹ Cf. the names of his two sons, both compounded with Jehovah—Ahaziah and Jehoram.

or of that yet larger company of seven thousand who did not bow the knee to Baal. The struggle was lifelong, but the victory remained with Elijah, whose work was carried on by his successor Elisha. There is a passage in 1 Kings xix., which though critical difficulties¹ stand in the way of its being accepted as strictly genuine, yet shows us over how wide a sphere the prophetic activity was popularly regarded as extending. *Thou shalt anoint Hazael king of Syria, Jehu king of Israel, and Elisha to be prophet in thy room.* There is here no branch of national life unrepresented—its foreign policy, its internal government, its religious aspirations—all are within the scope of the prophet's work. And the fact that Elisha actually did bring about a change of dynasty in Syria, and also a political revolution within Israel, while he further came into relation with Judah, Moab, Edom, and Syria, shows that the popular estimation in this respect was by no means exaggerated. Indeed, as Elisha with his dying breath was urging the king of Israel to fresh efforts against the Syrian oppressor by promises of deliverance, the latter cried out in mournful admiration: *My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!*² and the title was well deserved, "so unceasing had been his military vigilance and political insight."³ Nor had Judah

¹ There is no reference in the history to the first two anointings, which are attributed to *Elisha*. An account of *Elijah's* activity in this respect may have fallen out between 18 and 19—or the sentence may reflect the feelings of a later age, which looked upon Elisha as carrying out the commands laid upon *Elijah* which his translation had made it impossible for him to fulfil.

² 2 Kings xiii. 14. ³ G. A. Smith, *Twelve Prophets*, i. 31.

been without prophets to warn or to encourage. Jahaziel, Eliezer, Zedekiah, are but a few names of the goodly fellowship whom the Lord sent continually to His people.¹ So by the time we reach the age of the "canonical" prophets, we find that the political character of prophecy was firmly established, and that, as a natural consequence, the prophets were largely occupied in seeking to guide and influence the mind of the reigning prince in accordance with those theocratic principles which they justly regarded as essential to the fulfilment of Israel's vocation. For we must not for a moment allow their political activity to obscure their true character. The prophets are not first and foremost orators, patriots, or social democrats—though there is some truth in each of these definitions;² rather they are, as the Bible itself calls them, "men of God"; their problems are religious problems: their ideals are religious ideals, for their religion is not merely one factor among others, it is pre-eminently *the* factor, the only real and ruling principle in their ministerial life and consciousness, and in the light of their religion all their hopes and fears are illuminated and transfigured.

§ III. THE FUNDAMENTAL IDEAS OF PROPHECY.

We shall now proceed to apply the results of our enquiry to the exposition of those prophetic books on the study of which we are about to enter. Without some such preliminary investigation a true

¹ 2 Chronicles xxiv. 19; Jeremiah vii. 25, 26.

² Cf. Kittel, *Profetie und Weissagung*, pp. 6-9.

understanding of the doctrines and ideals contained in them would have been practically impossible, since in no other way could we approach prophecy from the side which is alone admissible at the outset of our enquiry. Our first question must necessarily be: "What meaning did the human author intend to be attached to his words?" and it is not until this question has been fairly faced and answered, that we can legitimately proceed to enquire what further significance may be attached to the words as forming part of the one great continuous revelation of God by the Spirit *dividing to every man severally as He will*.

The two questions are quite distinct, yet neither can be considered unimportant and irrelevant;¹ for though an orthodox theologian may justly feel that the religious aspect of the question—what the Spirit signified by the words—is of far the greater importance, yet no interpreter of Scripture can possibly disregard the meaning or intention of the human author, and it is plain that if we wish to estimate aright the evidential value of prophecy, we must begin, at any rate, by treating it from its historical side.

But before doing so we must be careful to observe what limitations are imposed upon us by that aspect of prophecy with which we propose to deal. We are seeking to discover how far prophecy may be considered to have an evidential value. This at once suggests the question: "As the evidence of what, is prophecy especially valuable?" To which we may at once reply that we wish to ascertain

¹ Cf. Davidson's *O.T.P.*, p. 410.

the value of prophecy as an "evidence of the truth and excellence of the Christian religion." What then is the nature of the evidence adduced in support of this proposition? We can best formulate an answer by making a short digression, which will serve to illustrate our main thesis.

The gospel of St. Mark begins—and there are more indications than one that this beginning was common to all the earliest accounts of the life and work of Christ—with the citation of two prophecies bearing upon the Divine preparation for His advent.

First in time—though the last to be quoted—comes the passage from Isaiah: *The voice of one crying in the wilderness, prepare ye the way of the Lord.* Now, here it will be seen that the Old Testament author and the New Testament evangelist both regard the way of the Lord as something for which preparation must be made. And "he that crieth" is none other than the prophet "sent from God" and commissioned to declare to the people the counsel of the Lord.

This quotation is immediately preceded by another which, though originally spoken at a much later date, yet embodies precisely the same idea. Again, the Lord who Himself *will suddenly come to his temple* will first send a *messenger before his face*—a messenger who will fulfil exactly the same function as the prophet in the earlier passage—prepare his way before Him.

Moreover, it will be remembered that John the Baptist *shall be called a prophet of the Highest because*—just for this very reason that—*he will go before the face of the Lord to prepare his ways.*

We are, therefore, in accord with the teaching of both Old and New Testaments, if we regard prophecy as "a preparing of the way of the Lord"—a preparation for Christianity—and it is our task to discover whether this preparation may be regarded as being purely accidental, or whether all indications do not rather point to an entirely opposite conclusion.

For this preparation is not one-sided, but manifold.

(1) In the first place it prepares the way for the *teaching* of Christ. Christ openly declared the difference between His teaching and that which "was spoken to them of old." Now, what made this change possible? or rather, what made it possible for such a changed teaching to secure an appreciative audience? To this there can only be one answer. The prophets had for centuries been inculcating upon the people new conceptions of God, of His ethical perfections, His moral requirements, even His metaphysical attributes; new thoughts of life and duty, new ideas of a spiritual and universal religion, new hopes beyond the grave; and by their persistent preaching of these doctrines had at last secured their recognition in the creed of Judaism, thereby preparing the latter to be a fitting soil for the birth and propagation of the Christian religion. Anything, therefore, which tends to show that the prophets did not merely enlarge the teaching handed down to them in one or two particulars, but made a real advance towards the perfection of Christian doctrine, may be held as offering "evidence" of a Divine preparation for the latter. It will, therefore, not be out of place to sketch the doctrines of the different

prophets, that we may see clearly how great was the advance made towards the religion of Jesus Christ, without which they would seem to miss the very consummation for which it was their object to prepare.

(2) Again, prophecy prepares us for the *office* of Christ and His Church. We are accustomed to classify our own beliefs concerning the Saviour under the ideas of Prophet, Priest, and King—and prophecy—no doubt guided by historical circumstances, which are no less to be regarded as preparatory and providential than prophecy itself—insisted more and more upon the ideas underlying this threefold conception of mediation between God and man. They drew out the ideal significance of *the kingdom*, its universal dominion, its peaceful character, its establishment of order and justice, its eradication of lawlessness and vice, its strength in the might of the Lord, its final triumph over all adversaries, its corporate recognition of Jehovah as true king over all, sending on His people blessings both spiritual and material; while *the king* of David's line and David's character is represented as standing in the most intimate relation to God, endued richly for his office with the Spirit of Jehovah, ruling over his people with fatherly tenderness, subduing their enemies, preserving justice, punishing transgression, fulfilling the theocratic ideal by his glad submission to Jehovah's will, the mediator of the Divine rule, the fitting representative of the true king of Israel.

Prophecy also brings forward the task and office of *prophet*—one commissioned to teach the people

about the Lord their God. He must himself know God. He must be prepared to destroy as well as to build. He must be ready to encounter endless opposition, yet the Lord will be at his side to give him victory at the last. He can only speak that which God puts in his mouth. He is in fact the accredited organ of God's revelation of Himself to man. Nor is the work of the prophet to be confined to his own country. He has a yet further duty, to proclaim to all the heathen the glorious tidings of God's universal Fatherhood.

And corresponding with this prophetic figure, we have presented to us the idea of a *covenant*, a new covenant under which God will fulfil the grand prayer of Moses. *Would God that all the people of the Lord were prophets and that he would put his spirit upon them!*¹—for God will give His Spirit to every heart, so that *none shall say to his neighbour, Know the Lord, for all shall know him from greatest unto least.*²

Again, prophecy takes notice of the third great idea running through all Israelite history and religion—the idea of *priesthood and sacrifice*. Here again prophecy spiritualizes the conceptions of the ordinary worshipper. First and foremost the prophets emphatically lay down the utter worthlessness of all sacrifice apart from moral conditions. So strong indeed was their language on this point that many have been led to suppose that they were themselves anxious for the total abolition of animal sacrifice. This may be doubted, but it cannot be denied that they at any rate prepared the way for its supersession

¹ Numbers xi. 29.

² Jer. xxxi. 34.

by those spiritual sacrifices with which God is well pleased. But the main ideas underlying priesthood and sacrifice were forgiveness and atonement, and it is to these two problems that the prophets repeatedly address themselves. At first forgiveness was conceived as being simply an act of Divine mercy, though God provided the means of atonement. The prophets, however, came more and more to see that forgiveness was in some sense mediated. God punished the people for their sins, and they, recognizing their wickedness, repented of their sin, and so *their iniquity was pardoned*. The idea of this mediation first brought into prominence the doctrine of the Spirit whose work was regarded as closely connected with the ideas of forgiveness and renewal. But a further step is made by the later prophets who began to recognize something approximating to a substitutionary or at least vicarious system of punishment and atonement. This idea finds its completest and most elaborate expression in the picture of "the Servant of the Lord." Borrowing sacrificial phraseology, "this prophet lifts up the sacrificial idea out of the region of animal life into the human life." He teaches that suffering willingly borne may avail for others besides the sufferer. The Vulgate mistranslation of Is. liii. 7—*oblatus quia voluit*—expresses the deep truth of this passage, which is developed and emphasized by some of the later Psalmists also.

The idea of priesthood and sacrifice was not, therefore, abandoned but ennobled. The *priest* was one appointed to offer sacrifice and minister grace, and he had, moreover, that access to God which was

denied to the lay-people. Now the prophets looked forward to a time when the kingdom of God should be a kingdom of priests, when each member of that kingdom should have priestly access and priestly privilege, when all flesh should receive the Spirit's grace, and when by a sufficient sacrifice Jehovah's anger should be for ever turned away.

We thus see the growth and development of the three great ideas as to the working of God which underlies the religion of the Old Testament but which receive in the prophets just that treatment which was needed to bring out their spiritual significance. It is under these three ideas that we sum up all the work which Christ accomplished, and therefore the prophetic insistence on and spiritualization of these three lines of thought may justly be regarded as a Divinely designed preparation for that which afterwards did actually take place. We shall therefore be careful to include within the scope of our investigation all the efforts of the prophets to enlarge, develop, and purify these three conceptions, which undoubtedly found their highest realization in Christ and the Christian Church.

(3) But thirdly, prophecy prepared not only for the teaching, and the office of Christ, but also for *the true apprehension of His Person*. An Oriental would find it impossible to conceive of the triumph of an idea or institution. He would at once throw his beliefs into a concrete form, and look for an individual who should successfully realize his ideals. So among the Jews. They were led to hope for an ideal king to establish the kingdom of God; for an ideal prophet who should be a second Moses and

teach even the Gentiles the way of the Lord ; for an ideal priest, clothed in holy purity, who should, moreover, make his soul an offering for sin. These three ideal figures were originally nothing but the incarnation of great ideas, but they soon seem to have lost the character of personifications and to have become real persons. There can be little doubt that as the ideas were separate, so also were the persons originally conceived as quite distinct. For long it was to the king alone that the title of Messiah was exclusively applied, but as the ages wore on the various expectations became, as it were, concentrated into one great hope of a coming Redeemer.

But the prophets had conceived so lofty an idea of this future king that they invested him with more than human attributes. It is true he was regarded as of the house of David, as born a human child, sharing all the miseries of his people, but yet as endowed by Jehovah with marvellous gifts of grace to be the perfect Mediator of His sovereignty. He became "the Son of God" in something more than his official capacity ; he is invested with divine prerogatives ; he is even called *the Mighty God*.¹

Such passages are of the most vital importance in preparing the way for the doctrine of the Incarnation, which is further adumbrated not only in the various theophanies and divine manifestations, but also in those prophecies which declare that God Himself will reign in Zion, and come once more among His people.

Here then, again, is evidence of Divine forethought.

¹ Is. ix. 6.

The idea of an Incarnation was so constantly suggested in speech and symbol that no Jew attentive to the teaching of the Old Testament Scriptures could have pronounced such an idea impossible or incredible.

Thus in studying the evidential value of prophecy, we must take special account of this Messianic hope in the narrower sense—the expectation of a great Person fulfilling so perfectly the functions of prophet, priest, and king, so true to the theocracy—and we may add, the theanthropy—of the Old Testament, that we may justly regard Him as *the one Mediator between God and man*.¹

(4) Lastly, it is claimed that prophecy prepares us for the historical life of Christ—that history shows an actual correspondence between the prediction and the form of its fulfilment. Now, we may admit at once that we must not look for the minutest exactness of reproduction in the fulfilment: for who would think a prophecy invalidated by the non-fulfilment of some of its poetical or pictorial details? The main fulfilment is the fulfilment of ideas. But we must remember that *known unto God are all his works from the beginning*,² and that He, the Author of history no less than of prophecy, may have so disposed matters that a prophecy may receive a double fulfilment—that is, a fulfilment not only of ideas, but also of details—and further, that He may have designed such a circumstantial and literal correspondence between the event and the prediction as to draw the attention of those who are struck by the outer resemblance to the inner and more important

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 5.

² Acts xv. 18.

fulfilment of spiritual ideas. That this is so in not a few predictions can hardly be denied by any student of the Gospels—and we must carefully note all such instances as affording a yet further attestation of the evidential value of prophecy.

We can now examine in detail the growth and expansion of those fundamental ideas of prophecy which may be justly regarded as evidential. That is to say, as possessing a primary importance in that Divine scheme of educative preparation for the Christian religion. It would be possible to approach the subject in more than one way. We might, for instance, examine the teaching of individual prophets, and then seek to establish general conclusions from a comparison of their points of agreement and difference. But this would not only involve a lengthy discussion as to the genuineness of several passages, but also would, in all probability, result in a generally disconnected arrangement. Some of the main thoughts would have to be laid aside just at a critical period of their development, in order to elucidate the totally different contribution of another prophet to the doctrine of the Messianic hope.

An attempt to deal with prophecy according to the dates of the various compositions would be equally unsatisfactory. Not to mention the intrinsic difficulties of such an arrangement, this plan would ignore the fact that a later date does not necessarily imply advance. Account would have to be taken of all the retrogressions and repetitions. Again, we should be liable to that confusion of ideas which we particularly wish to avoid in attempting to estimate the evidential value of the prophetic work and literature.

For we are not called upon to examine the evidential value of certain passages of the prophetic writings, but the evidential value of prophecy—prophecy as a whole, prophecy as a religious and historical phenomenon. Consequently we must treat the subject in a manner which will enable us, while taking due account of the circumstances of authorship and historical environment, nevertheless to devote ourselves mainly to the study of the development and significance of those fundamental conceptions of prophecy to which we have already referred as constituting the most important element in the work of “preparing the way of the Lord.” We shall, therefore, endeavour to give a historical account of these main ideas, tracing their growth under the influence of different prophets, showing what meaning they had for their own contemporaries, and appreciating their significance as various portions of the whole counsel of God.

In doing so, we may concentrate our attention on those three points, which are on all hands admitted to be the central thoughts of Old Testament theology—the Kingdom, the Covenant, the Church, and the corresponding figures of King, Prophet, and Priest. What did the prophets have to say to these ideas? What new life did they throw into them? How did they spiritualize and enlarge them? How, in fact, did their teaching in these particulars “prepare the way” for their perfect realization in Christ?

Such a division, it must be admitted, is largely artificial, but it admirably serves the purpose of a clear and convenient classification, while it further

ensures a comprehensive survey of the whole field ; and possessing these merits, it is plainly not unsuited to our present line of investigation. We propose, therefore, to divide our examination of the prophetic doctrine into four sections :

- (1) The Kingdom and the King ;
- (2) The Covenant and the Prophet ;
- (3) The Church and the Priest ; and lastly,
- (4) The Messiah—in which we shall examine some of the special problems presented by the Messianic Hope in its narrower sense.

PART II.

THE KINGDOM AND THE KING.

§ I. ITS EARLIEST TREATMENT IN PROPHECY.

THE idea of the Kingdom has been rightly characterized as one of "the leading thoughts of the Christian religion."¹ It would indeed be difficult to over-estimate its importance. "It is one of those fundamental Biblical ideas which run through both Testaments alike, and appear in a great variety of application."² It constitutes an essential element in the teaching of Christ, and received still further development in the Apostolic writings. Of late it has been brought into remarkable prominence, as not a few scholars have been led to recognize its unique value as the central point of Christian ethics and Christian dogmatics.

Now, we have seen that the idea was by no means essentially new. It was in no sense created by the prophets. The Hebrews had a very high, though somewhat limited, view as to the Divine sovereignty in both nature and history. We have seen, moreover, that within the chosen nation, Jehovah could brook

¹ *H.D.B.*, vol. ii. 844.

² *S.-H.*, *Romans*, p. 34.

no rival. The acts of the civil government derived their authority from Him just as much as did the priestly oracles, and consequently Josephus was right to call the nation a "theocracy," though the term is utterly misleading if used to express the distinctive feature of the religion of Israel. For, in reality, as Robertson Smith points out, "the theocracy expresses precisely that feature in the religion of Israel which it had in common with the faiths of the surrounding nations." But just as Jehovah, God of Israel, proved Himself to be far higher than the gods, the divine kings of the nations, so also was His rule gradually perceived to be something very different from the theocracies of Israel's neighbours.

To bring out and emphasize this difference was the work of the prophetic school. Lacking the assurance of any hope beyond the grave, they looked to this life as the scene of God's dealings with men, and threw themselves with all the ardour of intense religious conviction into the whirl of difficulties and perplexities that confronted them in their national no less than in their individual experience. Their work was therefore at first mainly political. But it would be wholly erroneous to infer that their work on that account was not religious. The politics of the older days were not and could not be divorced from religion. Religious beliefs had to find outward expression, and they found it amid the political atmosphere of national life. It was absolutely inevitable that the prophets as leaders of religion in Israel should be constantly in closest touch with contemporary politics. We have noticed how frequently this political character of prophecy is illustrated by the part taken by

individual prophets in the course of Israel's history. Such contrasts, therefore, as are repeatedly drawn between "two distinct ideals, the prophetic and religious as opposed to the popular and political,"¹ are hardly quite fair, as they do not take full account of the substantial identity of political and religious beliefs in all nations at an early stage of their development. The kingdom of Israel to the prophets did not *symbolize*, but actually *was* the kingdom of God. Egypt and Babylon, Moab and Edom, *are* the enemies of that Kingdom. The possession of Canaan was not primarily a symbol, but the actual proof and guarantee of God's blessing. "The kingdom of God on earth was manifested in earthly symbols, and the prophetic Scriptures are written in terms of this earthly symbolism. Hence, when the prophets speak of the kingdom of God, they speak of the kingdom of God that then was, and as it then was, namely, an earthly kingdom. . . . When they speak of the extension of the kingdom of God, it is in the usual ways by which an earthly kingdom can be extended."²

The first principle in prophetic interpretation is to take the language of the prophets in its literal, natural meaning. We are, of course, perfectly justified in seeking to discover what further significance may be attached to their local and material representations. But the point of primary importance is to realize the dispensational character of the language of the prophets, that is to say, that they expressed even "the most spiritual and glorious truths regarding the kingdom of God in that form and in those relations

¹ So Volz continually.

² Davidson, *O.T.P.*, 162.

in which it existed in their own day.”¹ It would therefore follow, first, that where the conditions are different, there also the fulfilment will probably be different also, and secondly, that it is unreasonable to refuse to recognize the religious basis of all prophetic teaching, in however political a form it may occasionally find expression.

This receives a remarkable illustration in the writings of the first two “canonical” prophets. It was the task of Amos and Hosea “to break down” rather than “to build up.” The destruction of much that was evil had to be accomplished before the more congenial task of construction could be taken in hand.

Amos therefore proclaims a message of universal judgment. Now, that God will punish the wicked was a commonplace held by every Israelite. But Amos took an immense step forward when he asserted the universal character of this judgment. Jehovah, God of Israel, was absolutely righteous; and Amos realized that righteousness could not be a force operative only within the confines of Israel, but must bear universal sway. Accordingly, he identified Jehovah absolutely with the power of righteousness, and thus became the founder of “ethical monotheism” as opposed to “henotheism,” which had previously been the characteristic of Israel’s religion.²

¹ Davidson, *op. cit.*, 164.

² Henotheism (*εἰς θεός*) denotes the worship of one particular god in practice, and the acknowledgment of his pre-eminence, without thereby expressing any opinion with regard to the existence and power of other divine beings.

It is to Amos, then, that, humanly speaking, we owe the possibility of such an idea as a universal Kingdom of God among men. For, though Jehovah stood in a special relation to Israel, yet He was God of all the world, and *a Judge strong and righteous*,¹ and so He would not only punish the sins of Israel and the sins against Israel, but every breach of moral and religious law, such as the transgression of Moab against Edom.

And this God speaks to men in three ways.

First, He speaks through nature. He gave cleanness of teeth, He had witholden the rain, He had smitten the earth with mildew, He had sent among them the pestilence, He had overthrown some of them as Sodom and Gomorrah aforetime.² And this was all for a purpose—that they should return to Him. *But ye have not returned to me, saith the Lord.*³

And so He must speak again. He has often before spoken in history. The fate of the cities of the plain should not have been forgotten. He had not only brought Israel out of Egypt, but the Philistines from Kaphtor, and the Syrians from Kir, and in the wilderness He had taught them the true nature of His service and requirements, but all had been neglected, and a yet more terrible visitation was in store. *The Lord repented for this*,⁴ but at last he would *not pass by them any more*,⁵ and Israel

¹ Ps. vii. 12.

² The Doxologies are not referred to, as we cannot feel certain that they come from the hand of Amos, and their use would accordingly weaken, rather than strengthen, the argument.

³ Amos iv. 6, 8, 9, 10, 11.

⁴ Amos vii. 3, 6.

⁵ viii. 2.

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is called upon to *prepare to meet her God*.¹ Again, He would speak in no unintelligible terms, but in the plain facts of history. *Behold, I will raise up a nation against you*.² *I will cause you to go away captive beyond Damascus*.³

But, thirdly, that the full meaning of such things should not be lost on the people whom He loved and chastened, He further spoke by revelation, by inspiring those who should declare their significance. *I raised up your sons for prophets and your young men for Nazirites*.⁴ *He doeth nothing but he revealeth his secret to his servants, the prophets*.⁵ It is impossible to be silent. *The Lord has spoken, who can but prophesy?*⁶

What then does Amos prophesy? He predicts nothing but utter destruction for the guilty nation. Only one ray of hope⁷ breaks through the darkened heavens, *Seek ye me and ye shall live*.⁸

But a further question arises, as to whom these words were addressed. Were they spoken to the individual, or to the nation? To this there can be only one answer possible. Amos speaks not to the individual man or woman. He speaks to *the whole family of Israel*, even as the sins that he denounces are national sins, and the virtues he seeks to revive are civic virtues. *I know your manifold transgressions and your mighty sins; they afflict the just, they take a bribe, and they turn aside the poor in the gate*.⁹

¹ iv. 12. ² vi. 14. ³ v. 27. ⁴ ii. 11. ⁵ ii. 7. ⁶ iii. 8.

⁷ There is a general consensus of opinion that v. 15, ix. 11-15 are not genuine parts of the book of Amos.

⁸ v. 4. ⁹ v. 12.

And again, *They know not to do right, saith the Lord, who store up violence and robbery in their palaces.*¹

But Amos has a further quarrel with his contemporaries; he is compelled to denounce the utter hollowness of all their religious observances. It must still remain uncertain whether Amos attached any higher value to the worship of Judah, but he has nothing but contempt for both outward expression and inner significance of the religion of the Israelites of the North. He does not denounce the Northern ritual as schismatical, but as totally false to the true conception of Jehovah. *Come to Bethel and transgress, to Gilgal and multiply transgression, for this liketh you, O ye children of Israel, saith the Lord God.*² Again, *Seek ye me and ye shall live, but seek not Bethel, nor enter into Gilgal, and pass not to Beersheba.*³ *I hate, I despise your feast days.*⁴ And then, rising far above the level of his time, he boldly points out that God did not care for ritual observance, but for holy conduct and character. Did they offer Him sacrifice and offerings in the wilderness? Does He want them now? Does He require their music? *Take away from me the noise of thy songs, I will not accept your burnt offerings nor regard your peace offerings. But let judgment run down as waters and righteousness as a mighty stream.*⁵

So it was at one of these feast days that he appeared at Bethel, to tell the people how far they were from Him whom they professed to worship. There, as he stood alone, preaching his unwelcome

¹ iii. 10.

² iv. 4.

³ v. 4.

⁴ v. 21.

⁵ v. 22-24.

message to the thronging pilgrims, defying the vested interests of the priestly hierarchy, and the royal prerogative, his eyes saw another vision—the Lord standing at the altar, and he said *Smite*.¹ And Amos, obedient to the heavenly vision, smote. *The end is come upon my people Israel. The Lord hath sworn, surely I will never forget any of their works. They shall fall and never rise up again. Yea, he will make it as the mourning of an only son.*² And the prophet, suiting his action to the word, breaks forth into a song of lamentation :

*Fallen, no more shall she rise,
Virgin of Israel.
Left all alone on her land,
None to upraise her.*³

Now, the popular religion was based upon two main ideas, the idea of Jehovah's close connection with Israel, and a not less fervent belief that this relation would be fully and finally vindicated in the sight of the heathen by a great and victorious *day of the Lord*.⁴

What position did Amos take up with regard to these two conceptions? It is most important to note that he does not entirely repudiate either, though he completely alters their significance by his teaching.

In the first place he recognizes and accepts the special relation of Jehovah to Israel. Even in His most awful manifestation, He is still the God of Israel. *Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.*⁵ *You only have I known of all the families of the*

¹ ix. 1. ² viii. 2, 7, 10, 14. ³ v. 2. ⁴ v. 18-20. ⁵ iv. 12.

earth.¹ But this has a very different meaning for him than it possessed for those who were *at ease in Samaria*.² He lays down the law that privilege entails responsibility. *You only have I known, therefore will I punish you for all your iniquities.*³

Amos too believes in *a day of the Lord*. Yes, there shall be a day of the Lord. But woe to the guilty nation, for the day will be a complete vindication of Jehovah's awful righteousness. To the light-hearted sinners *It will be darkness and not light—even very dark and no brightness therein.*⁴

This is a fact of profound significance, as it proves conclusively that the popular origin of any particular hope or belief did not in itself constitute any bar to its adoption, doubtless in a very modified, if not in a completely altered form, into the circle of thoughts characteristic of the prophetic school.

But what is to be the end? Forgiveness? No, the Lord had forgiven them more than once, and now *He will not pass by them any more.*⁵ By a natural association of ideas, assisted by a simple assonance,⁶ the basket of summer fruit shows that the end is very near. And the end is truly final. *I will never forget any of their works.*⁷ *I will set mine eyes upon them for evil and not for good.*⁸ *They shall never rise up again.*⁹

Is there then no hope for Israel? Apparently not. It seems almost certain that Amos did not anticipate any deliverance. The words of comfort

¹ iii. 2. ² vi. 1. ³ v. 20. ⁴ v. 20. ⁵ viii. 2.

⁶ יָרֵךְ the autumn, "summer" (fruit). יָרֵךְ the end.

⁷ viii. 7. ⁸ Amos ix. 4. ⁹ viii. 14.

and hopeful assurance at the close of his book breathe the spirit, as they betray the language of a later age, which had learnt from the experience of a brighter dawn that the Lord would indeed *have mercy on the remnant of Joseph*¹ and *raise up the fallen tabernacle of David*.²

How then can the work of Amos be in any sense regarded as evidential? It is indisputable that he predicted the captivity, which, after a considerable interval, engulfed the tribes of Northern Israel, and that, further, this prediction was uttered at a time of apparent security and national prosperity. But he did more than this. He is the first, as far as we can judge, to discern the true significance of those forty years in the wilderness—without sacrifice or ritual—as a moral training for the chosen people.³ He further gave to the New Testament a vision, the vision so characteristic of himself, the Lord at the altar ready to smite, incorporated into the mystical book describing the final overthrow of all false power, political and religious.⁴ But most important of all he gave to the New Testament, and conceivably even to the Old Testament itself, the use of a name; a name embodying an inexhaustible conception of God יהוה צבאות (*Jehovah Sabaoth*). Originally it may have denoted no more than the Leader of Israel's armies, but in the mouth of Amos it has a far wider meaning, the Controller of history, the Lord of nature, the Potentate over all the world, the Sovereign of all the heavenly powers, the Almighty; its significance ever expand-

¹ v. 15.² ix. 11.³ Acts vii. 42-43.⁴ Apoc. viii. 3.

ing with the expansion and spiritualization of the idea of God.

And in this name, as used by him, lies the greatness of Amos. If the Hebrew religion was ever to become the religion of the world, nay, if it was ever to survive at all, it had to be divested of that cramping particularism which would have entirely incapacitated it from ever fulfilling a useful mission to mankind. And if ever there was a time when the task of shaking off this religious nationalism was both supremely difficult and absolutely imperative, it was at the moment when Amos heard above the clash of the temple music, above the sounds of revelry and merriment, above the hum of industry, the warlike tramp of the dread nation of the North, marching on with resistless might, overthrowing states and religions in its impetuous onset, and even now crouching down to spring on them *that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria*.¹ Then was it given to Amos to realize that in the course of events, regardless of all human expectations and opinions, Jehovah was working His purpose out,—His purpose of absolute righteousness, and that the God of Israel was the Lord Almighty, triumphantly seated on the throne of universal might and power.

So, despite the unrelieved gloom which characterizes the preaching and writing of the genuine Amos, he yet prepared the way for a true realization of the kingdom of God, in three most important particulars.

(1) First, he made possible the idea of a universal rule. Israel was not the only nation which Jehovah

¹ Amos vi. 1.

had brought up from among a strange people, nor was Israel the only nation in which He could display His righteous power. To the teaching of Amos we must attribute the motive power of the series of prophetic oracles that transformed the religion of Israel into a religion of the world. He first expressed, if he did not originate, the grand and glorious thought of the universal supremacy of God, and the truth that *His kingdom ruleth over all*.¹

(2) But Amos went still further. He distinctly enunciated the conditional nature of God's relation to His people. This idea was entirely foreign to contemporary thought, which regarded it as morally impossible for a divinity to neglect his worshippers. To them the downfall of a nation necessarily involved the downfall of its god. Very different was the conception of Amos. "By weakening the special relation of God to Israel, or at least by conceiving it as founded on moral conditions, the fulfilment of which would secure to any other people an exactly similar relation, Amos gave a spiritual basis to religion. It is this which made possible the fact that the religion of Israel and the God of Israel were not involved in Israel's overthrow, but emerged from that calamity with renewed strength."² That is to say, Amos made it possible to view the kingdom as not only universal, but as also metaphysical and religious.

(3) But again, Amos goes deep into the whole religious question. He discriminates between ritual and religion. He most emphatically repudiates in the name of God all the sacrifices and peace-

¹ Ps. ciii. 19.

² Cornill, *Isr. Pro.*, 47, 47.

offerings in which the children of Israel took such pleasure. He even hints that to God all ritual is a matter of indifference, while it is utterly worthless when it fails to express the religion of the heart. He thus adds the conception of spirituality to the idea of the kingdom.

There are two further points in the teaching of Amos which call for special notice. First, he insists upon moral duties. To him there is practically no distinction between morality and religion. God requires an account not merely of our dealings between our friends and neighbours, but also of our actions to our enemies. Nothing is more striking in Amos than his insistence upon moral duties.

Secondly, however, we must observe one great limitation. It would scarcely be accurate to say that Amos knew nothing of the dealings of God with the individual soul,—that is contradicted by his own experience ; but it is nevertheless true that his prophecies are all directed not to the individual but to the state. He describes how God deals with *peoples*, and what virtues a community should acquire, and what national vices and sins are sure to receive punishment. This is perhaps the one limitation which Amos imposes on himself. The subject of his prophecies throughout is the people in their relation to God. But does not this political complexion make yet more wonderful the greatness of his other conceptions ? The kingdom, if politically conceived, is yet moral, religious, spiritual, universal.

And so we leave Amos. He sees no hope, he expresses no love, but he has a firm unshakeable faith in Jehovah, God of Hosts, and his message to

the people that refused to hear His voice in nature, in history, in conscience, still rings clear across the ages. *Prepare to meet thy God*. Strong in his faith, he proclaims just those truths which were needed *to prepare the way of the Lord*. If the Lord did at last *come to his own*, and His own were not prepared to receive Him, it was not that there had been no preparation, but that they had consistently refused to listen *to the voices of the prophets read every sabbath day* that bade them *prepare to meet their God*.

The mantle of Amos fell upon the shoulders of Hosea. It is almost impossible to imagine a greater contrast. The one left his own country to deliver a single message of warning and woe to the light-hearted people of the northern kingdom. The other spent a life-long ministry in preaching to his disheartened and disorganized compatriots. A remarkable difference is also discernible in the character and message of the two prophets, Amos the inflexible preacher of righteousness and judgment to come, Hosea the tender-hearted prophet of outraged love. The main contribution of Hosea to the religious development of Israel must be reserved for a later chapter ; for the present we must confine ourselves to Hosea's conception of the kingdom of God.

It is universally conceded that the monarchy, as it then existed in Israel, deserved and received an unqualified condemnation from the prophet whom Jehovah raised up at this period of national

decline. The long indictment of Ephraim's sin culminates in an attack on the wickedness in high places. "The king and court, so far from setting an example of righteousness, are themselves notorious offenders. *They make the king glad with their wickedness and the princes with their lies. They are all adulterers. In the day of our king—a coronation banquet, perhaps, or some such birthday feast as is described in St. Mark vi. 21-26—the princes made him sick with bottles of wine: he stretched forth his hand with the scornors.*"¹

But it was not only the character of the reigning princes that called for rebuke. The death of Jeroboam had been succeeded by a period of the most frightful anarchy. Public life had become hopelessly degraded. The lurid flames of murder, conspiracy, and insurrection served only to throw into deeper relief the utter corruption, that hideous background of *swearing and lying, and killing and stealing, and adultery, and violent bloodshed*,² that hung like a thick pall over every branch of national life. For brief moments, when the darkness is torn by a lightning flash, we behold phantom kings, involving the nation in yet more hopeless misery by a useless policy of unprofitable alliances, and then the gloom closes in again, and we see no more; but in the darkness we hear the clash of arms and shrieks of despair, while streams of blood tell their own story of another tragedy round the throne, which has been once more seized by an unscrupulous adventurer. Such is the picture Hosea draws of the terrible years in which he was

¹vii. 3-5.²iv. 3.

called upon to exercise his prophetic ministry amid the decline and fall of the northern kingdom, and history tells us that its fearful realism is no exaggeration.

Can we wonder then that Hosea loathes these kings, and sees in their dread fate a further indication of Jehovah's wrath against the whole people who have sinned in and with their royal head? What good have these kings been to Israel? *Where now is thy king that he may save thee, and thy princes that they may deliver thee?*¹ Let history supply the answer. *All their kings have fallen, and none among them calleth upon me.*² It is, then, to no chance coincidence that these murderous revolutions are due. *They have made kings, yet not from me, they have made princes, yet I knew them not.*³ *I gave them a king in mine anger and took him away in my wrath*⁴—grand words of scorn which aptly summarize the godless anarchy which characterized the last stages of the dissolution of the Israelitish State.

But does not the passage last quoted go beyond this? *I will be thy king: where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities? and thy judges of whom thou saidst, Give me a king and princes? I gave thee a king in mine anger, and took him away in my wrath.*⁵ Do not these words point to the conclusion that Hosea possessed "a fundamental dislike of the monarchical institution?"⁶ This con-

¹ xiii. 10. ² vii. 7. ³ viii. 4. ⁴ xiii. 11. ⁵ xiii. 10-12.

⁶ So Kittel, *Hist. of Heb.*, ii. p. 327, who, however, points out that this dislike cannot be urged as a proof against his actual preference for the Davidic dynasty.

tention can be supported by other allusions in his writings, though it would oblige us to pronounce against the genuineness of some suspected passages. Thus, in delineating his future ideal¹ he ignores the monarchy, while in another passage he expressly repudiates all its associations. *For the children of Israel shall be many days without king, and without prince.*² And again, if we may follow the reading of LXX, *They shall cease a little (or in a little while) from the anointing of kings and princes.* It is indeed particularly noticeable with what reiterated frequency the king is specially singled out as an object of the Divine judgment. The words already quoted, xiii. 10-11, may contain a distinct if not a principal reference to the inauguration of regal government recorded in 1 Sam. viii., and some scholars following the Targum³ explain "the days of Gibeah" as an allusion to the election of Saul, but this seems most unlikely, as it does not correspond with any tradition with which we are acquainted on the subject. The language of Hosea is, however, so strong that even a cautious critic like König admits that he regarded the institution of the kingship as "an aberration of Jehovah's people." It may be true to say that Hosea sees in the monarchy as it then existed "a temptation to impious trust in human power," and that he attached no special importance to its preservation in the future. But it is too much to affirm that the monarchical institution is totally opposed to his religious convictions, or that the idea

¹ xiv. 4. ² iii. 4.

³ *E.g.* Nowack. It is fair to say that the episode in Judges xix. can hardly be intended.

of a pious king is an absolute contradiction in terms, or that in his view the kingship is in itself incompatible with the theocratic ideal.

Hosea's judgment of the monarchy is "practical and historical, not theoretical."¹ He is weary of all political intrigues. His interest lies in religious conversion rather than in political regeneration. He looks upon all political life as treason against the one and only king of Israel.²

There is at first sight something very surprising in this, for though Hosea shows his independence by condemning an act which was accomplished with the active sanction of his predecessors,³ and though we have learnt not to look for any mechanical uniformity in the prophetic writings, yet experience has taught us to see that there can be no real fundamental contradiction of ideas in successive revelations of God's will. That the prophets should prosecute independent lines of thought, is natural, but that they should be the exponents of mutually exclusive views would be hardly credible. Moreover, the time had not yet come for the entire spiritualization of the idea of a kingdom, and though the real religious significance of Hosea is to be sought in another direction, it would indeed be a matter for astonishment if an idea, so profound, so far reaching, as that of the kingdom of God, should be not only disregarded,

¹ Davidson in *H.D.B.*, ii. 424.

² To adopt the impressive words of a German writer, "in der erhofften künftigen Zeit des Heils wo alle Verhältnisse so sind wie Gott sie wünscht, da giebt es keinen König und keine Fürsten, keine Politik und keine Bündnisse, keine Rosse und keine Wagen, keinen Krieg und keinen Sieg" (Cornill, *Isr. Pro.*, 55).

³ The blood of Jezreel, *i.e.* Jehu's bloody Revolution.

but practically controverted by one of the earliest of the canonical prophets.

We are now in a position to discuss the reference in iii. 5, to "David their king." The arguments to be drawn from the general character of Hosea's attitude towards the kingship are not such as to make the allusion in his mouth impossible or even, we might add, improbable. But here we become involved in the question of Hosea's references to Judah. These have been condemned as entirely spurious, but it would be far more difficult to believe that Hosea could never have alluded to the sister kingdom.¹

Now, it is unnecessary to suppose with Ewald that Hosea composed his book in Judah ; it is simpler to believe that he regarded Judah as involved in the sin, and punishment, of Israel. But yet, in two important points Judah presented a most remarkable contrast to the state of the northern kingdom. In the first place, an uninterrupted line of kings occupied the throne in peaceful and legitimate succession, and secondly, though Judah had to answer for many idolatrous practices, yet the regular worship and superior sanctity of the Temple constituted a perpetual if silent witness to a purer creed, and a more spiritual conception of Jehovah than was possible at the syncretistic sanctuaries where the local cults were represented.

¹That some of the allusions are very probably not genuine, may be admitted ; i. 7, for instance, is obviously out of place, and may have been introduced by a citizen of Judah after the destruction of Sennacherib as a contrast to the fate of Israel. But there are other references which there really is no reason to question.

Hosea, therefore, might well lift his eyes from the horrors of bloodshed and anarchy by which he was surrounded, and fix them with longing on the stable government and dignified worship of Zion, whence Amos too had heard the voice of the Lord coming to him over the wilds of Tekoa. And then how natural that he should long for the unity which had once characterized Israel's rule, for a time when the present jealousies and wars might cease, when *they should appoint unto themselves one head, and seek the Lord their God, and David their king.*¹

But here we are met by two objections. Does not this view of the future contradict the ideals to which the prophet gives expression in other passages whether of warning or of hope? Indeed, the question is often raised whether the two latter ideas are not themselves incapable of reconciliation. There is, however, no need to suppose that either is not authentic. They are both entirely after the manner of Hosea who can never bring himself to believe in the final failure of Divine love. But is not the king omitted in those other delineations of future bliss? Yes, he is, but that does not prove that the idea is entirely alien to Hosea, nor indeed is the possibility excluded that he may have changed his views at different periods of his life. Driver² enters a much-needed protest against "the tendency of recent criticism to limit unduly the spiritual capabilities and imaginative power of the pre-exilic prophets." He rightly points out with Ewald that "the prophets are poets often guided by impulse and feeling rather than by strict logic," and conse-

¹ i. 11, iii. 5.

² *L.O.T.*, p. 306.

quently, there is nothing incompatible with identity of authorship, if now one element, now another, should be introduced into different passages dealing with the same hope or ideal.

Another objection involved the phrase, "David their king" is drawn from the democratic character of the prophet's conceptions. He conceives of Israel in its relation to Jehovah as one single person, and therefore any political organization with its varying grades of distinction must be foreign to the prophet's thought. Now, to this it may be replied that "David" implies a conception rather than a person. It means the legitimate dynasty of Jesse, and all its accompanying blessings. It is surely unnecessary to insist with Delitzsch¹ upon a more narrowly Messianic interpretation. He bases his view on the fact that the words are *דוד מלכם* (*David their king*) and not *דוד מזורע* (*of the seed of David*), or *מבית דוד* (*of the house of David*), and that the Targum interprets "They will obey the Messiah, the Son of David, their king." But when we consider the fact that Hosea would probably not have desired the restoration of many of the most prominent features in David's reign, the empire, the wars, the subjugation of the heathen, the political glory, and indeed, in his final picture of the nation's happiness, avoids all mention of those things, we must conclude that "David their king" is a purely spiritual conception, and that "the name of David is the historical symbol of a united Israel."²

¹ Delitzsch, *Messianische Weissagungen*, 104.

² W. R. Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, 186. It should be mentioned that the linguistic argument is certainly not against the genuineness of the words.

Hosea's conclusions as to the kingdom of God are therefore of the most profound importance, even though they do not constitute in themselves the most important part of his teaching. It is most remarkable that, despite his intense spirituality, he could yet look forward to the latter days when *the children of Israel should return to the Lord, and David their king*, and again, that he, a citizen of the northern kingdom, should decline to take his Messianic expectations from that quarter, but should look to the house of David for the restoration of that national unity which had been so rudely broken. And, further, we may note another feature which will meet us again and again in the course of our study of the prophetic writings. The miserable failure of the actual king of Israel to fulfil his theocratic vocation afforded no ground for discouragement or despair to those imbued with the true spirit of the Old Testament theocracy. There is no stronger evidence of the Divine power which sustained the prophets in their endeavours, and endued them with that heroic perseverance which alone made the realization of their aspirations ultimately possible, than the fact that the highest visions of hope and glory sprang into existence in the darkest hour before the dawn; that, to borrow a figure of later prophecy, it was *the desert that blossomed as the rose, yea blossomed abundantly, as the glory of Lebanon and the excellency of Carmel and Sharon*; and may we not in this striking peculiarity, this victory in failure, so different from the religions of other nations whose loftiest aspirations were inspired by their highest attainments,

see with the prophet whose words we are quoting, *the glory of the Lord, the excellency of our God?*

We have now examined the idea of the kingdom of God as it is represented in the two earliest prophets whose writings we possess. Their position was a peculiar one, and it deserves separate treatment. They were sent to prophesy to a doomed nation; they were commissioned to deliver a message of destruction rather than of deliverance. The people to whom they preached did not return to Jehovah. The punishment fell. The Assyrians carried them away; their place knew them no more. They have passed from history never to return. They have utterly perished.

But not so the prophetic words which proclaimed the certainty of their bitter end. They have been preserved to us *for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for instruction which is in righteousness.*¹ ♦ The work of the prophets was not in vain. Their words were treasured and reflected on. Others arose in the sister kingdom of Judah to follow in their steps, and point to the awful verification their words had received. It was the preaching of Amos and Hosea which prepared the way for an Isaiah or a Jeremiah to enforce those lessons which made it possible for the religion of Jehovah to survive the dissolution and destruction of the state. It is to these first two prophets that we owe the idea of an imperishable kingdom of God, strong, united, spiritual, universal, an idea which only grew mightier and mightier as the kingdoms of this world crumbled to ruin and decay.

¹ 2 Tim. iii. 16.

The later prophets developed and strengthened this idea, but when we consider the moment of its origin, the assured conviction of its first preachers, though all facts and all theories seemed to point to a totally opposite conclusion, its triumphant vindication in history and religion, and finally its completest fulfilment and highest realization in the teaching of Him who came to proclaim good tidings of a kingdom among, and within us, then we may make our own the words of one who cannot be considered as being unduly biassed in a supernatural direction: "Viewing the whole question from an objective standpoint, there is really no other basis for our discussion, but the necessity of recognizing a providential guidance at work in the real progress discernible in the development of religion."¹ A study of their works constrains us to recognize not only a divine origin and power in an idea so grand and glorious, but also a providential guidance which made it possible for the prophets to proclaim just precisely those truths, neither more nor fewer, which were necessary for the circumstances in which they were placed. We recognize the wisdom of Him who declared: *When I shall find the set time, I shall judge uprightly.*² But more than all this, we see the hand of God *preparing the way* for the promulgation and reception of these essential truths as to His character and requirements, which *in many ways and in many fragments he spake to the fathers in the prophets, but which to us he has spoken in his Son.*

¹ Duhm, *Theologie der Propheten*, p. 89.

² Ps. lxxv. 2.

§ II. THE DIVINE SOVEREIGNTY.

BEFORE embarking on the history of the gradual idealization of the Kingdom of God in prophetic literature, two preliminary considerations are particularly noteworthy.

In the first place, we must ascertain the exact meaning we should attach to the expression "the Kingdom of God," and secondly, we must study the mediatorial character of this Divine rule. Dalman, to whom we owe the most thoroughly scientific examination of the words from a linguistic point of view, concludes that "there can be no doubt that in the Old Testament as in later Jewish literature מלכות (*Malcuth*) always signifies the *rule* and never the *realm* of the King," that is to say, the Kingdom of God denotes the activity of the Ruler rather than the society over which He rules and the organization of His rule. He proceeds to give several instances of its use which can hardly be considered as carrying absolute conviction, but supports his view by pointing to the fact that "to-day as in days of yore an Oriental kingdom is no body politic according to our ideas, nor indeed any combination of people by whatever means effected, but a personal rule embracing a distinct sphere."¹ This, if true, would of course have a most important bearing on the interpretation of the phrase in the New Testament, but an examination of its use in the Psalms and Prophets will hardly bear out the idea; and besides this, it must be obvious that there can

¹ Dalman, *Die Worte Jesu*, p. 77.

be no rule without a sphere of rule, and that consequently the idea of "realm" is not only not excluded, but frequently becomes the most prominent factor in the conception.

But there is another point which calls for notice at this early stage of our investigation into this doctrine of the Kingdom of God. *God spake and there was*—so runs the simple story of Genesis—but Hebrew theology developed this unartificial language in a more speculative direction by elaborating the idea of the "Word" or "Wisdom" of God. We may see the first trace of this personification in Psalm xxxiii. 6, which, however, is scarcely more than a poetic rendering of the passage in Gen. i. 2. *By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.* Later, we find "the word" regarded as the agent of God in nature,¹ while in another passage "the word" is His instrument in His dealings with men. *He sent his word and healed them; he delivered them out of their distress.*² "The word" performs the will of Jehovah. It accomplishes the purpose for which it is sent,³ and is even represented as possessing a self-fulfilling energy. *The Lord sent a word into Jacob and it hath lighted upon Israel,*⁴ where Delitzsch remarks: "The word is in nature and history the messenger of the Lord." The doctrine of the word received still further treatment as the idea of Wisdom was developed in the Wisdom literature. The most conspicuous passage in this

¹ Ps. cxlvii. 18.

² Ps. cvii. 20.

³ Is. lv. 8-11.

⁴ Is. ix. 8.

connection is to be found in the Book of Proverbs,¹ where Wisdom receives "distinct personification approaching but not reaching hypostatization."² Brought into being before creation, emanating from God, and directing all human life and thought, she is conceived as being a separate existence from God and yet as in the most intimate relation to Him. But though anterior to the physical world, Wisdom is created at a fixed point of time; and as the work of creation is definitely assigned to Jehovah,³ Wisdom is thus conceived as a spectator rather than as an operator.

In Job xxviii. we have a similar personification—where Wisdom is regarded more from an ethical than a cosmogonic standpoint. Man cannot find her, but she is declared by God to be identical with God-fearing righteousness. "These personifications mark the highest point to which Hebrew thought on the world rose."⁴

The representation of Wisdom is supranational. It is a wholly gratuitous assumption to suppose that by "the men" with whom she deals "are of course meant simply Israelites."⁵ It is just this universalism which constitutes the difference between this passage and Ben Sira 24, where Wisdom is identified not with righteousness but with the Jewish law, and is thus presumably confined to Israel. It has indeed

¹ viii. 22-31. ² Toy, *Proverbs*, 171.

³ Cf. Hastings, *B. D.*, iv. 925. As לְבַלְלָם implies "intimate association rather than architectonic activity," it seems necessary to abandon אֲמֵן in the sense of architect or master workman, and on the analogy of הָאֲמֵן in Numb. xi. 12 to translate "ward," or "foster-child."

⁴ Davidson, *Book of Job*, lxi. ⁵ Siegfried in *H. D. B.*, vol. iv. p. 925.

been said of this conception that it is "as un-Israelitish as possible, and absolutely opposed to the monotheism of יהוה אחד" (*Jehovah is one*). It is, we are told, "only to be explained as due to the influence of Greek philosophy."¹ A more cautious exegesis however would see in the identification of wisdom with "the highest moral principle in the universe a characteristically Jewish² conception, or at the most a combination of philosophic universality with Jewish theistic belief."³

Though, perhaps, a strict interpretation would rule this idea out of the domain of Prophecy, yet its importance in "preparing the way" for the Incarnation can hardly be over-estimated, culminating as it does, on the one hand, in the sublime conception of Philo, and, on the other, giving both life and colour to the Palestinian מִמְרָא (*Memra*) or דְּבִרָא (*Debhurah*). The growth and development of this idea may justly be regarded as "prophetic" and "evidential" in the highest degree—for not only did it lead men to contemplate the possibility of distinctions within the Divine Being, but it undoubtedly "prepared the conceptual form for the theological apprehension and significance of the new revelation in Jesus Christ."⁴

But if God thus manifested Himself by the Word in nature and history, the way was no less clearly prepared for the idea of mediation in His more direct dealings with men. This we find in the מַלְאֲךְ יְהוָה (*Malach Jehovah*, i.e. *The angel of the Lord*), who is so constantly introduced as the messenger of God to

¹ *Ibid.*

² Ottley, *Doctrine of Incarnation*, p. 45.

³ Toy, 172.

⁴ Pfeleiderer, quoted by Ottley, 47.

man. He is both distinguished from, and identified with Jehovah. Thus, to take an instance from the prophets, in Malachi iii. 1,¹ the angel of the covenant is differentiated from Jehovah, and yet it is Jehovah who comes suddenly to His temple. The language of the Old Testament seems to point conclusively to the fact that this being is not one of the created angels, but Jehovah Himself in self-manifestation. In Isaiah lxiii. He is called מַלְאָךְ פָּנָיו² (*Angel of His presence*) which really has the same meaning; for the expression does not signify the angel who stands continually in God's presence, but rather one in whom the פָּנִים (*the face*), that is, the personal presence of God, is manifested.³ The older theologians from Justin onwards interpreted "the angel of the Lord" as the Second Person in the Trinity, and saw in his appearances a premonition of the Incarnation. While we could not assent to the first part of this proposition, as the idea of distinctions within the Godhead could never have been entertained by any Old Testament writer, yet we may cordially agree with the second, for "the angel of the Lord" so fully represented or expressed Jehovah, that men had the assurance that when he spoke or acted among them, Jehovah was acting or speaking."⁴ In him God's presence is specially manifested to men, and in His presence thus manifested we see the twofold "possibility of a personal

¹ Cf. also Hosea xii. 4.

² The LXX rendering οὐ πρέσβυς οὐδὲ ἄγγελος ἀλλ' αὐτὸς ἔσωσεν αὐτούς—only involves the textual alteration of צִיר from צַר, but seems a hardly possible translation.

³ Cf. Dillmann, *Jesaias*, 513.

⁴ Davidson in *H.D.B.*, i. 94.

converse between God and man, and further of God revealing Himself in and through a created form,"¹ and thus we have "a real preparation for the revelation of God in Christ, and the Incarnation of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity."² This is the thought so wonderfully unfolded in the Prologue to St. John. *The Word was God and with God, and the Word was made flesh. God only-begotten being in the bosom of his Father, hath declared him.*³ The teaching of St. John is only "intelligible as the final co-ordination, through facts, of different modes of thought on the Divine being, and Divine action, which are contained in the Old Testament."⁴

But in this universal kingdom there was another force at work which may perhaps be called the internal, as the other is a more or less external manifestation of Jehovah's activity. *God spake and there was, and the spirit of God brooded upon the waters.*⁵ The Spirit was the creative force of God, the principle of life in man and in nature, and co-operates with the Word in the work of creation.⁶ The spirit of Jehovah vitalizes what the word of Jehovah has called into being.⁷

But the function of the Spirit is wider than this. He is the source of every natural and intellectual gift⁸

¹ Ottley, *op. cit.*, 42.

² Gibson, *Exposition of xxxix. Art.*, 96.

³ St. John i. 1, 14, 18 (*ἐκεῖνος ἐξήγησάτο*).

⁴ Westcott's *St. John*, p. xviii.

⁵ Gen. i. 1-3.

⁶ Isaiah xxxii. 15; Ps. civ. 30; cf. also Ezek. xxxviii. (רוח).

⁷ Ps. xxxiii. 6.

⁸ Cf. Gen. xli. 38; Ex. xxxi. 3, xxxv. 31; Deut. xxxiv. 9; Jdg. xiii. 25, xiv. 6; 1 Sam. xi. 6 (cf. with 1 Sam. x. 9); 1 Kings iii. 28; Job xxvii. 3, xxxiii. 4; Isaiah xi. xxviii. 5-6.

—the fountain of all inspiration and holiness.¹ In this connection we should especially observe the endowment of the Spirit granted to the Messiah to enable him adequately to fulfil his high calling. But Messiah was not only to receive in himself the fulness of spiritual gifts, he was to inaugurate a new dispensation of the Spirit. “The Spirit had been a national endowment residing in the community,”² though the nation had resisted his guidance. Similarly Haggai represents the Spirit as remaining among the Israelites from the time of the Egyptian deliverance,³ and Nehemiah in his prayer alludes to the gift of *God’s good spirit to instruct* the nation in the way in which it should go.⁴ A similar expression—*Thy Holy Spirit* (רִיחַ קֹדֶשׁ τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιόν σου LXX)—meets us in the Psalter, where the Spirit is conceived as the source of sanctification for Israelites,⁵ but whether as individuals or as a nation it seems hard to say. This, however, seems certain, that “under the Old Testament it is not given to every believer, but to Israel as a nation; residing in chosen organs, especially in the prophets, who are par excellence *men of the spirit* (Hos. ix. 7).”⁶ But the Messiah, himself the recipient of the fullest spiritual gifts, would inaugurate a more universal outpouring. Just as Moses, in whom the Spirit pre-eminently dwelt, so far from resenting His descent upon Eldad and

¹ For inspiration, Numb. xi. 25; 1 Sam. x. 6; 2 Sam. xxxii. 2; Isaiah lxi. 1; Hos. ix. 7; Mic. iii. 8; Ezek. ii. 2, iii. 2, 14.

² Skinner (*Camb. Bible for Schools*) on Isaiah lxiii. 10, 11.

³ Hag. ii. 2.

⁴ Neh. ix. 20.

⁵ Ps. li.

⁶ W. R. Smith, *Old Testament in J. C.*, Additional note, p. 440.

Medad in the camp, welcomed His wider diffusion in the noble and significant words, *Would God that all the people of the Lord were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit upon them*,¹—words which have been held to express the ideal of Israel's religion;—so the advent of the Messianic kingdom would be heralded by a great extension of the Spirit's influence and power. Thus Jeremiah, in his description of the new covenant, though not actually mentioning the Spirit by name, points clearly enough to the results of the Spirit's activity as results individually achieved,² while in the parallel passage of Ezekiel, the Spirit is expressly named as the agent by whom this universal cleansing and forgiveness is to be won for each individual member of the chosen nation;³ and Joel predicts a spiritual outpouring of a yet more universal character. *I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh*.⁴

Moreover, "the Spirit of *God is personal inasmuch as the Spirit is God (Ps. cxxxix. 7, Is. lxiii. 9, 10). There is, besides, a quasi-independence ascribed to the Spirit which approaches to a recognition of distinct personality, especially in places where the Spirit and the word are contrasted—but the distinction applies only to the external activity of those two divine forces."⁵

It must now be obvious how thoroughly the Old Testament prepared the way for the New Testament presentation of the Spirit as both personal

¹ Numb. xi. 24-30.

² Jer. xxxi. 34.

³ Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27.

⁴ Joel ii. 28. It is surely somewhat arbitrary to limit the כל בשר to the faithful in Israel, especially in the face of the parallel in Gen. vi. 3.

⁵ Swete in *H. D. B.*, ii. 404.

and Divine; and also for the conception of a distinction of persons within the one Godhead—which, after all, is the most markedly peculiar characteristic of the Christian Religion. For in the New Testament the work of the Spirit in the Incarnation and ministry of Jesus is frequently and pointedly recognized, while the Risen Lord still showers spiritual gifts (πνευματικὰ χαρίσματα) on His Church below, and on the individuals of whom it is composed. The Old Testament doctrine viewed in this light is seen to offer the most striking evidence of a divinely ordered design for directing men's thoughts into channels which would make them naturally receptive of *the truth as it is in Jesus*.

We thus see how great a service Dalman has rendered to the cause of revealed religion by calling attention in the most emphatic manner to the idea of personal rule involved in the conception of the kingdom of God. It forces us to a consideration of the divine character and activity as it is taught throughout the whole of the Old Testament and deepened by the Prophets; and we have seen how marvellously the prophetic conceptions¹ were adapted to prepare the way for the fuller truths of Christian revelation. The mediation of God's rule externally by the Word or Wisdom in nature and history, and by the Angel of the Lord in direct dealings with man; internally through His "Holy Spirit,"

¹ We must not allow ourselves to forget that "prophecy" is not co-extensive with the writings of "the canonical prophets." The Hebrews seem to have recognized this more than moderns. (Cf. the original titles of the historical books.)

supplied the necessary foundation for Christian dogmatics. To see in the various theophanies an adumbration of personal distinctions within the Godhead, or of the marvellous truth of the Incarnation, is not the mark of a shallow piety or of an unreasoning mediævalism. For a great fact underlies all natural and Scriptural typology. The final consummation of the Son of God becoming man and dwelling with man, must have had some previous indications ; and these repeated theophanies, these reiterated assurances, if not actual predelineations, of the union of the human and divine, and of the distinctions of operation within the Godhead, would constitute a meaningless problem did we not possess in the Incarnation, and in the light which it shed upon the Divine being and character and purpose, a full and complete solution of what must otherwise have been an insoluble enigma.

Here if anywhere we are conscious of that tendency in life and in thought, in doctrine and practice, towards an apprehension of Christian ideals, which is at once a proof of the evidential importance of prophecy and of the value for apologetic purposes of the whole Old Testament dispensation.

§ III. THE LIMITATIONS OF THE PROPHETIC DOCTRINE.

THE idea of a kingdom of God among men did not perish with the fall of the northern kingdom. Its last prophet had, as we have seen, directed his

thoughts to Judah, where the stability of the Davidic dynasty and the worship at the central sanctuary seemed to furnish some grounds for expecting the ultimate fulfilment of the prophets' hopes. At this time, moreover, Judah, under the strong and capable rule of Uzziah, had developed her resources so successfully that she bade fair to emulate the glory and prosperity of the Solomonic empire. But to the careful observer, there were not wanting ominous signs of the approaching disintegration. The community was being split up into factions with mutually opposing interests. The extinction of the hardy agricultural class—the real backbone of the Hebrew State—was accelerated by the rise of wealthy landowners; the progress of civilization had brought with it a multitude of attendant evils; the tyranny of the rich, the oppression of the poor, the intrigues of politicians, the venality of the judges, all contributed to produce a state of society which needed only the removal of the strong and energetic ruler at its head to ensure its complete collapse. It was at this juncture that God raised up the first of that glorious company of prophets *to prophesy concerning Judah and Jerusalem*.¹ In the year that King Uzziah died,² sinking after a glorious reign of fifty years into a leper's grave—fit emblem of the hollow worthlessness of all Judah's boasted progress—Isaiah saw the Lord *high and lifted up. His train filled the Temple*. Himself the prophet did not see for the thick clouds of incense ascending up continually before Him, but he heard the song of the Seraphim proclaiming with unceasing voice the awful

¹ Isaiah i. 1, ii. 1.

² Isaiah vi. 1.

holiness of Jehovah, God of Hosts, and the universality of His glory.

Such was the inaugural vision of Judah's first prophet. He beheld the Lord in the beauty of holiness; and after a significant symbol of purification, he received his commission to preach to the people in Jehovah's name. He is warned, at the outset, of the almost hopeless character of his task, but is at the same time comforted by the assurance that his work will not be utterly fruitless. Though the nation must be decimated by a sweeping judgment, yet there remains a holy and therefore indestructible stock which afterwards will put forth leaves and blossom abundantly.¹

In considering the contribution of the Judean prophets to the idea of a kingdom of God, we find four main conceptions, all of which find expression in this vision of Isaiah's call, and all of which are either reinforced by later prophets with fresh arguments, or pre-supposed as the basis of their own teaching.

(1) First, there is the holiness of Jehovah. God is separate and distinct from man. *He is God, not man. His ways are not their ways, nor his thoughts their thoughts.* And this holiness of God, when once appreciated, implies the uncleanness of the people to whom He deigns to speak. The

¹ The words קדש מצבתה are wanting in the LXX, and are therefore considered by Duhm and Cheyne to be a gloss. Their genuineness, however, makes very little difference, as it is conceded that they do but express a fundamental doctrine of Isaianic prophecy, cf. vii. 3, x. 20-23 (iv. 2, xi. 10). Moreover, as Shear-jashub (vii. 3) was apparently born before this time, it is very probable that the words, if a gloss, simply replace other words to the same effect.

prophet himself must be purified before he can speak to or for God. The nation must be purged through and through before it can be recognized as the holy seed in which the Holy God can find pleasure. The awful holiness of God must be manifested in judgment against all that contravenes His essential character, or stands in the way of the realization of His holy purpose. There can be no kingdom of God where this holiness is not recognized as paramount.

(2) But this Jehovah is in a very special sense the God of Israel. It is in the earthly temple at Jerusalem¹ that the vision is vouchsafed to the prophet; and Isaiah is sent to *this people*. Indeed, his message concerns *this people* exclusively. This double view of Jehovah is summed up in a phrase which appears to be of Isaiah's coining—*The Holy one of Israel*. That Israel stands in a special relation to God is a commonplace of all prophecy, and until it was perceived that this relation was only held in trust for the whole world, it inevitably gave to Hebrew prophecy that national colouring which is so prominent a characteristic of Hebrew religion.

(3) But this nationalism was kept in check by higher and worthier ideas of God drawn, as seems most probable, from the Divine manifestations in nature. *The fulness of all the earth is his glory*. Amos had prepared the way for the acceptance of this doctrine of the universality of the Divine operations

¹ Notice the definite article אֶת־הַמִּזְבֵּחַ and the reference to the altar : and cf. the frequent references in the Psalter to the sanctuary where God's power and glory might be known.

in history as well as in nature, and the idea was to receive a continually expanding significance at the hands of its prophetic interpreters until the particularistic tendencies of the early Hebrew religion became completely absorbed in the magnificent universalism of later prophecy.

(4) Lastly, the prophets one and all, unlike Amos, possessed an assured conviction that God's purpose for Israel would not be eternally frustrated, that a remnant—if only a remnant, yet a remnant—would return to inherit the glorious destinies and privileges of the theocratic kingdom.

So in this inaugural vision, we can discern the outlines of those four great conceptions which appear, with many ramifications and variations, woven into the whole texture of the prophetic representation of the kingdom of God.

The religious character of the kingdom is implied in the holiness of the king. *He will gather out of his kingdom all things that offend*, that it may indeed become *a peculiar nation, a kingdom of priests*. It is barely necessary to give examples of the reiterated frequency with which the prophets insist upon the moral and religious basis upon which the fabric of God's kingdom must be erected. As to the expression of this religion in outward acts of worship, there was much diversity of opinion among the various exponents of prophetic thought, due to a combination of historical, local, and personal causes: but as to the character desiderated in the worshipper, there is no such divergence. All alike agree that Jehovah requires a devout heart rather than any number of formal acts of worship. *To*

what purpose is the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the Lord. I am sated with burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts, and I delight not in the blood of bullocks and he-goats. I cannot endure wickedness and worship. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes—cease to do evil, learn to do well. Seek judgment, set right the oppressor, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow,¹ and Jeremiah denounces the idea that vows and holy flesh can take away wickedness,² or again, the glorious words of Micah testify to the same truth—Wherewith shall I come before the Lord and bow myself before the high God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He hath showed thee, O man, what is good, and what doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?³

There is no prophet who does not realize the incompatibility of any wickedness with the peace and righteousness which are to characterize the kingdom of God.

¹ Isaiah i. 11, 13, 16, 17.

² Jeremiah xi. 15. The Hebrew text is obviously corrupt. The LXX gives the clue to the right text.

μη εὐχαλ καὶ κρέας ἀγνὸν ἀφελούσιν ἀπὸ σου τὰς κακίας σου ;

The Hebrew is easily reconstructed on this basis, for μη εὐχαλ read הנרבים in place of ההרבים (מומה) or perhaps החלֶבֶת as more suited to the following בָּשָׂר קָדֵשׁ (הרנית is not sufficiently well attested). Further, in place of פִּי רַעְחָבִי read יַעֲבְרוּ מַעְלֵיךְ רַעְחָבִי.

³ Mic. vi. 6-8.

But here a problem presented itself. How was this righteousness to be attained? And the answer originally given to this question resulted in imposing upon the religious thought of Israel those limitations of a national and political character which it took centuries to finally shake off.

The kingdom, it must be remembered, was not a mere visionary dream of the religious imagination. The prophets were not mere speculative theorists, but men of action, who set themselves to give concrete expression to their hopes, and whose teaching was intended to issue in practical consequences. Accordingly they had no choice but to apply their principles to the test of actual life.

The Hebrew state was, as we have seen, an attempt to realize the theocratic ideal. Whatever views might be entertained as to the existence or power of foreign deities, Jehovah was the God of Israel, and within Israel all was subject—theoretically—to His Will. In times of distress, leaders were raised up by Him to deliver His people.¹ In times of peace, the decision of the judge was to be regarded as the oracle of God.² In times of war, it was Jehovah who was *God of all the armies of Israel*.³ Now, whatever threatened to obscure this intimate relation subsisting between Israel and the Divine King, was plainly opposed to the truest form of the theocracy, and called for removal or suppression. For when the religious leaders of Israel had once appropriated this conception of a kingdom of God in their midst, they must have become acutely conscious of the glaring contradiction between the

¹ Judges, *passim*.

² *E.g.* 1 Sam. ii. 25.

³ 1 Sam. vii. 45.

ideal as they conceived it, and all the sin and misery of the present. They therefore felt themselves bound to labour strenuously for the perfect establishment of the kingdom of God by doing all in their power to purify and ennoble the existing constitution. The prophets did not concern themselves with a heavenly *Jerusalem which is above*. Rather it was to the actual inhabitants of earthly Zion that they preached their tidings of woe and weal, and directed alike their promises and their threats.

*The heathen have not knowledge of his laws,*¹ so sang the Psalmist; and this was the point of view adopted by the prophets, at any rate in the earlier stages of their activity. But Israel did know, or could have known, Jehovah; and therefore it was in Israel that they looked for the establishment of a kingdom corresponding to the principle of the theocracy.² The prophet, whose message was directed to his contemporaries, embodied his thoughts concerning the kingdom in those local and temporary forms which could alone make them practically intelligible to those to whom they were primarily addressed. This will help us to understand the national character of prophecy, which certainly cannot be regarded as the outcome of an externalizing and materializing tendency. It is rather to be treated as an essential feature of prophecy, which, if written for our warning, comfort and edification, was yet spoken to the early Israelites under definite circumstances which called for such help and guidance

¹ Ps. cxlvii. 20.

² Cf. Ps. lxxvi. 1. "In Jewry is God known; His name is great in Israel; in Salem is His tabernacle, and His dwelling in Zion."

as the prophetic word was intended to supply. The "national" character of prophecy is nothing more than the inevitable corollary of the principle that God always speaks to men in such words and in such forms as they can at the time understand and appreciate.

It is therefore entirely opposed to the true understanding of prophecy to spiritualize away into mere typical abstractions those numerous allusions to historical circumstances, or that contemporary colouring which is so characteristic of their delineations of the future. To the prophets, Israel *was* the kingdom of God, and the preservation of Israel they considered—and rightly considered—essential to the final realization of the theocracy. For not only does the prophet "look at the historical present in the light of the perfect time, but *vice versa* he sees the latter only in broken colours in which the atmosphere of the historical present suffers it to appear."¹

Nahum, for instance, is concerned almost exclusively with the fall of Nineveh, *the bloody city, full of lies and rapine.*² In a poem of almost Pindaric splendour, he raises over the doomed city a shout of triumph in the name of all those over whom *her wickedness had passed continually.*³ *Nineveh is laid waste: who will bemoan her? Whence shall I seek comforters for thee?*⁴ Whence indeed? for *all that hear the bruit of thee clap their hands over thee.*⁵ But amidst the universal joy caused by the tyrants' downfall there is a special message for the little kingdom of God. *Though they be in full strength and likewise many, even so shall they*

¹ Riehm, p. 150. ² Nahum iii. 1. ³ iii. 19. ⁴ iii. 7. ⁵ iii. 19.

*be cut down, and he shall pass away. Though I have afflicted thee, yet will I afflict thee no more. And now will I break his yoke from off thee, and will burst thy bonds in sunder. Keep thy feasts, O Judah, perform thy vows—for the wicked one shall no more pass through thee, he is utterly cut off.*¹

It would entirely miss the purport of this splendid poem to suppose that the passages just quoted were intended to signify a spiritual deliverance from the captivity of sin. So far from that being the case, Nahum makes no allusion whatever to those ethical or religious conditions which would be necessary if Judah were to profit by the overthrow of her oppressor. We have not a word concerning repentance, or those sins of Judah which weighed so heavily on the mind of his contemporary Zephaniah. Nahum's view is limited to a single manifestation of Divine righteousness. The power which had refused to recognize God or man,² the nation *whose might was their God*,³ should at length receive the punishment which was their due, and prove that *verily there is a God that judgeth the earth*.⁴

Zephaniah also is moved to speak of the universal destruction that *the Day of the Lord* will inaugurate. The Philistines (ii. 1-3), Moab and Ammon (8-10), Ethiopia (12), and even the proud Assyrian capital (13-15) shall be overwhelmed in this awful catastrophe;⁵ nor will Judah herself be excepted, unless she turn and repent of the sins which cry for vengeance. Zephaniah's prophecy is thus distinctly "national." The nations which have

¹ i. 12, 13, 15.

² Isaiah x. 9-11, xxxvi. 18-20.

³ Habakkuk i. 11.

⁴ Ps. lxiii. 11.

⁵ Zeph. ii. 1-15.

been the inveterate enemies of Israel must be destroyed before *the remnant of Israel can serve him without fear*.¹ For God will assemble the kingdoms to pour out upon them his indignation, even his fierce anger—for all the earth shall be devoured.²

If the fall of Assyria is to be so interpreted, we must be careful to attach no other significance to those prophecies in which Isaiah denounces her impious presumption. There again Isaiah did not arbitrarily select Assyria, or Egypt, as a type of the principalities and powers marshalled against the Church of God. The prophet's life is the explanation of the prophet's words. Like Elisha before him, he toiled and laboured with unwearied energy and zeal for the preservation of the actual city and state of Jerusalem. And *Wisdom was justified of her children*. It is now generally accepted as a self-evident truth that the annihilation of Judah or her absorption into the Assyrian empire would have almost necessarily entailed, at that period of her spiritual development, the disappearance of the religion with which she was entrusted for the benefit of mankind.

Similarly Jeremiah advises submission to the Chaldeans from motives in which religious insight is not unmixed with political sagacity. In the days of Isaiah God had *spoken by men of strange lips and another tongue*.³ The Assyrians were His mouth-piece to Israel—and now in the exile and deportation He was again speaking to them through *His servant* Nebuchadnezzar and the Chaldeans, whom He had

¹ iii. 13.

² iii. 8.

³ Is. xxviii. 11.

raised up for that purpose.¹ And yet later *He raised up one from the north*,² and for their sake sent to Babylon and brought down the Chaldeans,³ and spoke through Cyrus his shepherd, whose right hand he had holden to subdue nations before him, to His own people, saying of Jerusalem, *she shall be built, and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid*.⁴

There is yet one more instance of this national colouring of prophecy. Edom is continually represented as the most determined and bitter foe of the chosen people. There had always been hostile feeling between Edom and Israel,⁵ dating at least from the subjugation of the former country by David. But this hostility, aggravated as it was by the fact of their relationship through their descent from Jacob and Esau, culminated in the crowning exhibition of Edom's malicious delight at the fall of Jerusalem, and this conduct is repeatedly denounced by the prophets. *Remember, Lord, the children of Edom in the day of Jerusalem*.⁶ Obadiah's whole prophecy is taken up with the vengeance that is to fall on Esau for his *unbrotherly* conduct.⁷ After the destruction of Jerusalem, the encroachments of Edom continued to excite the most bitter indignation,⁸ and later prophecy concerns itself almost exclusively with the

¹ Jer. xxv. 9, xxvii. 6, xliii. 10. ² Is. xli. 25. ³ Is. xliii. 14.

⁴ Is. xlv. 28, xlvi. Compare also the prophecies dealing with the fall of Babylon. Is. xliii., xiv. 1-23, xlvii. Jer. xlvii., xlviii., li., lii.

⁵ *Perpetual hatred*. Ezek. xxxv. 5 (Amos i. 11), 2 Sam. viii. 13, 14.

⁶ Ps. cxxxvii. 7.

⁷ Obad. 10, 12, cf. Jer. xlix. 7.

⁸ Ezek. xxxv. 10, 1 Macc. v. 65.

dreadful doom that the stern law of retaliation demanded.¹ Accordingly we have the vision of Israel's warrior king, arrayed in garments *stained* and *sprinkled* with the blood of the slaughtered Edomites,² and the yet more frightful picture of mountains streaming with Idumean blood, and the dissolution of the host of heaven, described in the earlier chapters of the same book.³

How, then, are we to explain these national prophecies? Should we single out some points which have been literally fulfilled?⁴ In that case we should at once be confronted with other parts which have been obviously not fulfilled. "Of prophecies so interpreted the adversary might justly say, they are made up of fortunate guesses alternating with palpable failures."⁵

Are we then driven to a spiritualizing exegesis which is obviously opposed to the original sense of the prophet's words? If so, we surely surrender the whole case for the value of prophecy. For we have seen that a prophet was one commissioned by God to teach his own people the lessons of warning or comfort which they most needed to receive. If Edom and Babylon are to be allegorically interpreted, the value of the message lies not in the original prophecy, but in the sense

¹ Cf. Mal. i. 2-5.

² Is. lxiii. 1-6 (a passage from which, it may be remarked, all soteriological conceptions are entirely absent).

³ Is. xxxiv.

⁴ For other instances: Tyre in Ezekiel, Moab in Is. xxiv.-xxvii., Egypt in Is. xviii., xix., etc., and in Ezek.

⁵ Fairbairn, *On Prophecy*, 223.

which another dispensation has taught us to put upon their words.

What, then, is to be our intellectual attitude to such passages? We may confess at once that their national colouring does constitute a distinct limitation from our religious point of view. But, then, these limitations were not extraneous to, but rather inherent in the conceptions of religious life and thought underlying the whole of the Old Testament.

To the religious thinkers and leaders of that age, Israel was the kingdom of the Lord. Any obstacle therefore which a foreign power imposed in the way of the complete realization of the theocratic ideals, must be removed. The nations *round about* did constantly seek to destroy Israel, in utter disregard of Israel's vocation and Israel's God. They thus became the enemies of the kingdom of God, and as such were meet subjects for the vengeance of Israel's God. *We* have learnt to realize that the Kingdom of Christ is independent of political power and national institutions, but it was not so in Israel. The destruction of Israel as a nation would of necessity have involved the abolition of those religious ideals which Israel had been called and created to foster and propagate. Had Israel become merged among the nations of the world, she would have lost all sense of her high privileges and prerogatives, as the people of Jehovah, and the whole world would have been the poorer. *Gebal and Ammon and Amalek, the Philistines with them that dwell at Tyre* are not figurative expressions. They

denote real enemies, representing influences inimical to the growth and expansion of the kingdom of God, as it existed in those days. The prophets were commissioned to speak real words of assurance and encouragement to the Jewish Church, though the form of their message was determined by the outward circumstances of the theocracy. Little Israel, secure in the might of Israel's God, should not be overwhelmed by the great world powers of Assyria, or Egypt, Babylôn, or Persia : nor should they for ever endure humiliating encroachments from their heathen neighbours, be they Moab or Edom, Philistia or Syria. The kingdom of God *should* be preserved, that is the essence of their teaching ; the theocratic ideal *should* be fulfilled despite all disappointments and obstacles. Brute force and jealous intrigue are alike powerless to frustrate God's eternal purpose. The Old Testament itself teaches us that where the conditions are not the same, then the outward form of the promise will also not be identical, and in looking for the fulfilment of those prophecies we must be most careful to remember this all-important principle. The essential point to observe is that beneath the ever-changing expression of this truth occasioned, if not demanded, by the varying circumstances of historical and political environment, beneath all dispensational limitations and particularistic tendencies, beneath the ideal character of the prophetic imagery, one lesson is constantly enforced and one unshaken hope is continuously re-affirmed—that eventually *the kingdom shall be the Lord's*.¹

¹ Obadiah 21.

But the kingdom of God needed internal reform no less than external preservation. To this task, also, the prophets addressed themselves, and it is in this connection that we observe the second great limitation which marked their pronouncements. As we have already shown, the political character of prophecy is one of its most marked characteristics. The prophets felt, as did the Greek orators at a later period, that it was their office and duty, "to see events in their beginnings, to discern their purport and tendencies from the first, and to forewarn their countrymen accordingly; to confine within the narrowest bounds those political vices of habitual procrastination, supineness, ignorance and love of strife which are inevitable in all states; and to dispose men's minds instead to enlightened concord and unanimity, and to the zealous discharge of their social duties."¹ But in another respect the two classes were strikingly different, and this difference constitutes precisely the distinguishing characteristic of the two peoples—for to the Greek orators the nation, to the Hebrew prophets religion was the main interest. We must, however, recollect that at any rate till the time of Jeremiah politics and religion were inextricably interwoven, and that, further, the nation rather than the individual was the subject of all religious aspiration, and consequently the sphere also of prophetic activity. In this respect "the Hebrew prophets have been felt by the moderns to stand nearer to them than the Apostles do. The Apostles

¹ Demosthenes, quoted by Strachey, *Hebrew politics in the times of Sargon and Sennacherib*.

were sojourners and pilgrims: the prophets were citizens and patriots. It is a heavenly country to which the former look forward: the latter, without any promise of the life to come, labour for the establishment of the kingdom of God within the conditions of their own national history.”¹

We have already noticed the great influence on state affairs exercised by the earlier prophets such as Nathan, Abijah, Elijah, and Elisha. This interference does not cease, when we come to the age of the canonical prophets. “The prophets probably might have preached as they liked about the nature of Jehovah and the kind of service pleasing to Him, if they had not gone further and drawn inferences as to the destinies of the nation. It was not their religious opinions, but their political threats, that drew persecution on the prophets.”² In proof of this assertion, we may appeal to two most instructive examples. Amos was apparently allowed to preach in peace his creed of social righteousness and civic purity—doctrines to which it was painfully obvious that the nation had completely failed to respond; he seems also to have been undisturbed when asserting that the bad harvests, and drought and pestilence were signs of God's displeasure, sent in the hope of inducing the guilty nation to return to Him. But they did not return. To Amos the result of such wilful refusal was obvious, and he did not shrink from boldly proclaiming his own convictions; for the Lord had said to him: *Behold, I will*

¹ G. A. Smith, *Preaching of O.T. to the Age*, 264.

² Davidson on “Prophecy” in *H.D.B.*

not again pass by my people any more—and the high places of Isaac shall be desolate, and the sanctuaries of Israel shall be laid waste, and I will rise against the house of Jeroboam with the sword. Amos had spoken: he had predicted a political upheaval, and that in a place—the king's chapel and the king's court—where such language was in the highest degree indecorous and ill advised. The king was informed—*Amos hath conspired against thee in the midst of the house of Israel, the land is not able to bear all his words.* For thus saith Amos—*Jeroboam shall die by the sword, and Israel shall surely be led away captive out of his land.* Thus both royal policy and priestly jealousy combined to suppress the unwelcome message of this political reformer, and Amos, enforcing his words with a terrible threat, was obliged to withdraw from the scene of his activity.

An even better known instance is the treatment accorded to the prophet Jeremiah. His spiritual and subjective conception of religion would in itself have made him few enemies. But he found it impossible to keep his religious convictions outside the political sphere, and it was this fact that transformed his ministry into a life-long martyrdom.

These instances¹ show how engrossed the prophets were in the politics of their country, and how their persecution was the natural outcome of their

¹ It is customary to see an allusion to a similar state of things in Isaiah viii. 12. But it may be pertinently asked—whether if the קִשְׁטָר here refers to the popular belief that the prophet was himself implicated in some treasonable conspiracy, he would have needed a supernatural revelation (viii. 11) to tell him of the falsity of the charge.

political activity. Now, the prophetic standpoint in this respect may be best appreciated if we observe the threefold character of their political ideals. We may notice, first, their insistence upon moral and social duties; secondly, the foreign policy which they were constrained to adopt in deference to their other conceptions; thirdly, their attitude towards existing institutions.

(1) Their position as social reformers has indeed been recognized by others as well as by theologians:¹ and this is not surprising, as almost every page bears witness to this their most prominent characteristic. Isaiah laments over *the faithful city that is become an harlot! She that was full of judgment! Righteousness lodged in her, but now murderers. Thy princes are rebellious and companions of thieves: everyone loveth gifts and followeth after rewards: they judge not the fatherless, neither doth the cause of the widow come unto them.*² *The Lord standeth up to plead and standeth to judge the peoples. The Lord will enter into judgment with the elders of his people and the princes thereof. And you,*³ *it is you that have eaten up the vineyard: the spoil of the poor is in your houses—what mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the face of the poor? saith the Lord, the Lord of Hosts.*⁴ And again, describing the wild grapes of Judah, God's pleasant vineyard, he deals exclusively with the social evils *which have entered*

¹ E.g. J. S. Mill, in *Representative Government*.

² Isaiah i. 21, 23.

³ יְהוָה "sturmend bricht die Gottesrede ein." Cf. Psalm ii. 6.

⁴ iii. 13-15.

*into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth.*¹ Lust, oppression, crime, these are the charges the prophet brings against the debased aristocracy of his day. In a series of "woes" he protests against the absorption of small properties by wealthy landowners, against the drunkenness and luxurious dissipation of the upper classes, against the spiritual blindness, mocking scepticism and insensibility to moral distinctions which are the inevitable accompaniments of voluptuous self-indulgence, against the self-satisfaction of astute politicians, against the wilful perversion of justice by corrupt judges.² The state of Judah he sums up with epigrammatic severity. *He looked for judgment, but behold oppression; for righteousness, but behold a cry.*³ No passage expresses more finely or more forcibly the idea of *justitia civilis*, which Isaiah set before himself as his ideal for *Judah and Jerusalem.*⁴

Micah, Isaiah's compatriot and contemporary, views the sins of the capital from the standpoint of the yeoman class, which had been in days of yore the backbone of the nation, but was now becoming rapidly extinct. He hurls his passionate invectives against *the heads of Jacob and rulers of the house of Israel, who hate the good and love the evil, who pluck off their skin from off them and their flesh from off their bones, who also eat the flesh of my people, and they flay their skin from off them, and break their bones—yea, they chop them in pieces as for the pot and as flesh within the caldron.*⁵ He too lets

¹ St. James v.

² Isaiah v. 1-16.

³ v. 7. יקן למשפט והנה משפח
לצדקה והנה צעקה

⁴ i. 1, ii. 1.

⁵ Micah iii. 1-3.

us see the process of accumulating large landed estates, but at the same time shows us the heartless cruelty of the evictions and disinheritances by means of which it was effected.¹ *The judges abhor judgment and pervert equity. They build up Zion with blood and Jerusalem with iniquity.*² All classes are equally corrupt. *The heads judge for reward, and the priests thereof teach for hire, and the prophets thereof divine for money*³—and so doom is inevitable.

Zephaniah⁴ condemns not merely the religious apathy of those *that are settled on their lees*,⁵ but in the name of Jehovah threatens *all those that leap over the threshold, which fill their master's house with violence and deceit*,⁶ and cries *woe to the rebellious and polluted and oppressing city*.⁷

And so Jeremiah again and again: *Run to and fro through the streets of Jerusalem, and see now and know and seek in the broad places thereof, if ye can find a man, if there be any that doeth justly, that seeketh truth.*⁸ Despairing of the poor and foolish, he got him to the great men and spoke to them. *They know the way of the Lord, he mused, and the judgment of their God. But no—these too with one accord have broken the yoke and burst the bands.*⁹ *Among my people are wicked men, they watch as fowlers lie in wait, they set a trap: they catch men. As a cage is full of birds, so are their houses full of deceit. They are waxen fat, they shine—yea they overpass in deeds of wickedness—they plead not the*

¹ ii. 1, 2, 9. ² iii. 9, 10. ³ *Ib.* 11.

⁴ Nahum also teaches that social wickedness among the Chaldeans cannot escape punishment any more than among his own countrymen.

⁵ Zeph. i. 12. ⁶ i. 9. ⁷ iii. 1. ⁸ Jer. v. 1. ⁹ v. 4-5.

*cause, the cause of the fatherless, that they should prosper, and the right of the needy do they not judge. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not my soul be avenged on such a nation as this?*¹ And thus he addresses the king: *Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness and his chambers by injustice—that useth his neighbour's service without wages and giveth him not his hire! Thine eyes and thine heart are not but for thy covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood and for oppression and for violence to do it.*²

Ezekiel also lays the utmost emphasis on civic righteousness. *In Jerusalem have they taken bribes to shed blood, they have taken usury and increase, and greedily gained of their neighbours by oppression;*³ and he who would save his own soul alive must not have eaten upon the mountains of Israel, nor lifted up his eyes to the idols of Israel, nor defiled his neighbour's wife, neither have wronged any, nor have taken aught to pledge, nor have spoiled by violence.⁴

We may conclude these quotations by a passage from Malachi, which breathes the spirit as it echoes the language of the older prophets. *I will come near you to judgment, saith Jehovah, and I will be a swift witness against the sorcerers and against the adulterers and against those that oppress the hireling in his wages, the widow and the fatherless, and that turn aside the stranger from his right and fear not me, saith the Lord of Hosts.*⁵

We have now established the ethical and social character of prophecy. The practical object of all

¹ v. 25-28.

² xxii. 13-17.

³ Ezekiel xxii. 12.

⁴ Ez. xviii. 15-16.

⁵ Mal. iii. 5.

Israel's religious thinkers was the establishment of a theocratic constitution, of a city which might fitly be designated *the City of God*.

(2) But how was this ideal to be accomplished? Not by the entire destruction of the existing state, but rather by its regeneration. The prophets had too strong a sense of the continuity and progressiveness of God's revelation to desire a complete break with the past. There must be judgment, deep and searching. Much would have to be annihilated, but still there would be the stump of the tree left to put out new branches and leaves; and this stump, signifying the saved remnant, would be holy, indestructible. The prophets therefore laboured strenuously for the preservation of the Jewish state, as well as for its purification, and in so doing they developed a distinct policy in regard to foreign alliances.

Judah had just emerged into the arena of universal history when Isaiah began to attain his commanding position in the state. For forty years he played the most conspicuous part in directing the affairs of this country during a most critical period. The eighth century witnessed the beginning of the long and fierce struggle for supremacy between Egypt and Assyria. In Jerusalem both had their adherents who were alike anxious for the king and court to commit themselves definitely to one or other of the contending parties. Isaiah on the contrary saw that this would only precipitate a crisis, and insisted that the only safety for Judah was to maintain an attitude of the strictest neutrality. In pursuance of this policy he begged king Ahaz to refrain from invoking the aid of Assyria to repel the attacks of

the Syro-Ephraimitish coalition. *Take heed and be quiet, fear not, neither be faint-hearted for these two tails of smoking firebrands.*¹ He realized the absurdity of placing the country in a state of vassalage to the Assyrian monarch—especially as the ambitious schemes of the allied kings were foredoomed to failure. But to Isaiah the occasion was a religious no less than a political crisis. On religious grounds he objected to any alliance with a heathen power. Jehovah had both the power and the will to defend His people, if they would but put their trust in Him. Employing once again a powerful assonance to express a far-reaching truth he declares: *If ye will not have faith ye shall not have staith,* אִם לֹא תִאֱמִינִי בִי לֹא תִאֱמִינִי.² The words, as has been justly pointed out, mark an epoch in the history of revelation³—from henceforth they became the watch-word of the prophetic party. So at a later date, when the prophet exposed the intrigues of the Egyptian party, he again refers to Jehovah's settled purpose for Zion as the only true ground for confidence, and concludes that *he that believeth shall not make haste.*⁴ Again, denouncing the fruitless embassy to seek assistance from *the Egyptians that shall help in vain and to no purpose*, he cries once more, *In returning and rest shall ye be saved, in quietness and confidence shall be your strength.*⁵ Isaiah devoted his whole life to bending the national policy into agreement with this fundamental truth. If only they would *sanctify the Lord of Hosts himself and let him be their fear and their dread,*⁶ they would

¹ Is. vii. 4.

² Is. vii. 9. G. A. Smith.

³ Skinner, p. 54.

⁴ Is. xxviii. 16.

⁵ Is. xxx. 7, 15.

Is. viii. 12.

not need to fear any of those wars or rumours of wars which were causing such widespread consternation at the time. Thus we can understand his deep-seated aversion to all those military preparations, and other signs of national wealth and pride, which he traces to *striking hands with strangers* (that is to say, to heathen alliances), and the impending overthrow of which he predicts in the majestic description of *the day when Jehovah shall arise to shake terribly the earth*.¹ In accordance with this conviction he strives to bring about among the people an attitude which will alone make possible an exhibition of God's saving purposes, while he is no less active with regard to the outward policy of the country—warning the politicians of the futility of trusting in Egypt, ridiculing the idea of a Philistine coalition, or of a Tyrian hegemony, and courteously declining the overtures of the Ethiopian ambassadors.² But he is no less convinced that Assyria cannot go beyond the purpose of Jehovah, and therefore while counting it criminal folly wantonly to provoke a conflict with those whom Jehovah has placed over them, he is equally assured that any attempt on the part of this foreign power to transgress the limits which God has put upon the extension of its sovereignty will be promptly and effectually visited by Divine chastisement. Accordingly, he declares that Assyria is but the *rod of Jehovah's anger*³ and

¹ Isaiah ii.

² Egypt, xix., xx., xxii. 15-25 (Shebna seems to have incurred Isaiah's wrath as an advocate of union with Egypt); xxxix. 15-24; xxx. 1-17; xxxi. 1-4; Tyre, xxiii.; Philistia, xiv. 28-32; Ethiopia, xviii.

³ Isaiah x. 5.

her failure to recognize her true position will bring down upon her the wrath of *the Sovereign Lord, the Holy one of Israel*.¹ Jehovah had a purpose with regard to Zion which nothing could alter or shake. In her He had *laid for a foundation a stone, tried and precious, even a sure foundation*.² In her He would be *exalted in judgment and sanctified through righteousness*.³ In her He would vindicate His power and His love by a judgment of all sinners within, and an overwhelming destruction of all enemies without. This is the significance of those two doctrines which give colour and meaning to all Isaiah's work—the doctrines of the purified remnant, and of the inviolability of Zion. These doctrines and the policy which resulted from their acceptance have been frequently disparaged as savouring of political quietude and Oriental inaction; but the truth is that Isaiah was very far from being opposed to action; what he did resent, was the introduction of political measures which entirely ignored Jehovah's world-supremacy, and His special relation to Israel. Politicians, who matured their plans independently of this all-important truth, were in reality omitting from their calculations the most important fact of all—that *He also is wise*.⁴ "Isaiah was not the enemy of patriotic effort, but only of the spurious patriotism that identifies national prosperity with the undisturbed persistence of cherished abuses. He did not value political freedom less than his countrymen did, but he valued it only when it meant freedom from

¹ Is. i. 24.

² Is. xxviii. 16.

³ Is. v. 37.

⁴ Is. xxxi. 2.

internal disorders as well as from foreign domination, the substitution for Assyrian bondage of the effective sovereignty of Jehovah's holiness."¹

The theories of Isaiah were submitted to the test of actual experience, and received a triumphant vindication in the facts of history. In the year 701 B.C. the Assyrians moved against Jerusalem. The situation was desperate. In his extremity king Hezekiah sent to the prophet, who confidently reasserted his unshaken conviction that Jehovah would interfere to save His city. The ground for this belief is not to be sought in any political foresight, but solely in that faith which he had made the ruling principle of all his political activity and religious belief. Efforts have been made to minimize the force of the prophecy by pointing to the fact that the power of Assyria was not entirely crushed, and that Sennacherib himself survived to conduct many successful operations, while the miraculous element of the deliverance is weakened by eliminating as far as possible the idea of a physical catastrophe and introducing the probability of various political considerations which accelerated, and indeed necessitated, the withdrawal of the Assyrian forces. We may, however, make our own the judicious words of Dillmann: "The fact remains that the Assyrian onslaught on Jerusalem was at that time frustrated in a manner in which faith could see nothing but a miracle—and the predictions to which the prophet had for many years given utterance and had reasserted in the last days of extremest danger, were fulfilled."²

¹ W. R. Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, 325. ² Dillmann, *Jesaias*, p. 329.

The prophetic ministry of Isaiah has thus an evidential value of its own, but its greatest importance is to be sought in another direction. He first made prophecy a real force in politics, and also defined politics as the sphere in which prophecy might most fitly be exercised. Amos thundered forth his relentless denunciations in a single message which, though not wholly destitute of references to the political atmosphere, is yet in the main quite indifferent to the general movements of international life. To Hosea the utter rottenness of the intrigues of the ruling class is so apparent that he longs for a time when there shall be no alliances and no politics at all. But Isaiah was a politician in the highest and noblest sense, and subsequent prophets followed his example. We have a significant instance of this alteration of the prophetic standpoint in the works of Jeremiah, whose temperament singularly resembles that of Hosea, and whose environment constitutes an equally remarkable parallel to that of his Northern predecessor. Both witnessed the decline and fall of their country, but while Hosea may almost be said to hail the prospect in so far as the destruction of the old would involve the possibility of an entirely new start, Jeremiah consistently labours in every possible way for the preservation of the Jewish state. His almost monotonous persistence in a course of political interference resulted in his being regarded as a menace to the welfare of the state—so little was his policy appreciated by those in authority. Like Isaiah, he urged the people to accept their circumstances as interpreting

the will of God. Like Isaiah, he recognized that the sins of the nation cried for punishment. Like Isaiah, he saw in the power that oppressed and finally destroyed Judah, an instrument in the hand of Israel's God. Like Isaiah, he advised submission to a nation which his own country was powerless to withstand. Like Isaiah, he knew how to rebuke kings and princes, how to oppose popular fears and popular aspirations.¹ And all his teaching, embodying as it did marvellous conceptions of the transcendent spirituality of God, was not couched in the language of abstract propositions, but translated into the common parlance of everyday life, and brought into the closest correlation with contemporary politics. A passage of Lord Shaftesbury on this aspect of Jeremiah's teaching is quoted by G. A. Smith in his book on the *Preaching of the Old Testament to the Age*, and offers a striking confirmation of this view: "If for political and public purposes there is one book in the Bible more valuable than another, it is Jeremiah. He was not always 'looking to the sun,' but he was looking to the earth, entreating, preaching, warning, threatening, promising, and he was in consequence regarded as a bore and a blunderer. Yet, if he had been attended to, Jerusalem might have survived for many centuries; and certainly she would have been spared the indescribable sufferings of soul and body that followed her destruction by Nebuchadnezzar."²

We see, therefore, how strong must have been

¹ Cf. esp. Jer. xxi. 9, xxxviii. 2.

² G. A. Smith, *Preaching of Old Testament*, 273.

the tie that bound prophecy to politics, when a personality like that of Jeremiah, whose strongly individualistic tendencies led him to the most original conceptions in regard to the non-political character of true religion, yet made the State the real subject of his prophecy.

We now pass on to consider the two great prophets of the exile—Ezekiel and the so-called Deutero-Isaiah—and in their writings we discover precisely the same phenomenon. The former goes further than Jeremiah in his emphatic and unqualified statement of the doctrine of individual responsibility.¹ In language admitting of no qualification, Ezekiel asserts the incalculable value of every single soul. But he supplements the teaching of Jeremiah. For while laying stress on personal religion, he yet perceived that this thought could only be actually realized in human experience by being combined with the conception of a Church or religious community, in which the individual could find both the strength which union alone can supply, and also the appropriate sphere for his religious activities. Ezekiel, therefore, did not regard the training of religious characters as the be-all and end-all of his prophetic and spiritual function—rather he aimed at making them worthy citizens of the kingdom of God, when the time should come for its re-establishment.

In the firm conviction that the kingdom of God would once more be set up on earth, he draws a picture of the ideal community. After all her enemies have been destroyed,² “a nobler temple

¹ xviii.

² xxxviii.-xxxix.

and a purer worship will be called into existence. . . . Jehovah will return to dwell in the midst of His regenerate people: a life-giving stream will issue from the Temple and fertilize the desert: the curse of barrenness will be removed.”¹

The great prophet of the exile, Deutero-Isaiah, bases his whole teaching on his interpretation of the national history. It is indeed true that politics do not play so conspicuous a part in his writings, as in those of the earlier prophets, but that is plainly due to the fact that Israel, having lost her independence as a state, politics could no longer as heretofore play a predominant part in national life, and the prophet was consequently left free to develop his religious conceptions. But argument and prediction are both made to rest upon the present significance of Israel's political position. The victories of Cyrus, the permission given to the Jews to return to their own land, the opportunities for the diffusion of true religion with which they were now entrusted—these are all political and material facts from which the prophet proceeds to draw the necessary inferences.

(3) We may now turn to our *third* point and seek

¹ xl., xlviii. Kirkpatrick, *D. of P.*, 336. Ezekiel has received very ungenerous treatment at the hands of Duhm. After a review of his teaching he proceeds: “Was wir hier ausführten hat schon nichts mehr mit der profetischen Religion zu thun; wir befinden uns schon in der Luft des Judaismus und des Talmud. . . . Hesekeil hat das Verdienst, die Ideale der Profeten in Gesetze und Dogmen umgesetzt und die geistig freie und sittliche Religion vernichtet zu haben.” *Theologie*, 263. For a more just appreciation of his worth, see Cornill, *Der Isr. Proph.*, 116-126, though it must be added that an element of exaggeration enters into his most excellent sketch.

to illustrate the political character of prophecy by noting its relation to the existing institutions of the State. The prophets looked for the preservation as well as the purification of the existing theocracy. Their ideals were cast in a political mould. Weary of all politics, Hosea yet pictured the Israel of the future as a united Israel under *David their king*. Similarly, Isaiah predicts that the result of Jehovah's dealings with Zion will be to *purge away all her dross, and take away all her tin—And I will restore thy judges as at the first and thy counsellors as at the beginning; afterward thou shalt be called, the city of righteousness, the faithful city. Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness.*¹ Here the ideal is beyond all doubt political. In the Zion of the future, there will still be *judges* and *counsellors*, and their character will be the guarantee of the re-establishment of social order throughout the land.

And again he declares that Jehovah will not proceed with building on the sure foundation He has laid in Zion until all political conduct shall have been reduced to conformity with the ideal principles of God's own standard of government. *Judgment also will I make the line, and righteousness the plummet: and the hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the waters shall overflow the hiding place.*² The present political outlook is hopeless enough. *As for my people his tyrant*³

¹ Isaiah i. 25-27.

² xxviii. 17.

³ נשיך either plural of majesty or conceivably intended as an allusion to the entourage of the young king.

*is a child, and women rule over him: the leaders are misleaders.*¹ But Isaiah does not despair. He looks forward with hope to a time when *a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall reign in judgment.*² The king of the latter days whom Isaiah depicts in such glowing colours, is endued with the fullest gifts of Jehovah's spirit for the proper execution of his task.³ And not the king only, but every member of the redeemed community will receive from Jehovah the spiritual endowment which will enable him perfectly to fulfil the condition of his office. *In that day shall the Lord of hosts be for a crown of glory and for a diadem of beauty unto the remnant of his people, and for a spirit of judgment to him that sitteth in judgment, and for strength to them that turn the battle at the gate.*⁴

Micah views the future from a totally different standpoint, but his prophecies are no less than Isaiah's the result of his political predilections. Micah was a countryman, and longed to see the wrongs of his people avenged on the proud and luxurious nobles of the capital. So far from looking for any amendment of the ruling classes, he exults in the thought of their impending destruction.⁵ The king himself must submit to the lowest indignities.⁶

¹ iii. 12.² xxxii. 1-2.³ xi. 1-4. The spiritual gifts are to be arranged in three pairs of two each:

(a) Intellectual qualifications.*

(b) Political sagacity and energy.

(c) Religious attitude. "Gott erkennen und fürchten ist das Wesen aller Religion, die biblische Definition derselben." Dillmann, *in loc.*⁴ xxviii. 6.⁵ i. 16, ii. 5, 10.⁶ v. 1.

Jerusalem itself, temple and all, shall be laid even with the ground.¹ A later age naturally interpreted this prediction of a total captivity as having reference to the Babylonian exile,² but Micah's own view was different. He appears to contemplate *a congregation of Jehovah remaining in the land.*³ *The glory of Israel* as in olden days finds a refuge *in the cave of Adullam.*⁴ And though there will be deliverance, it is not to be found within the gates of the haughty city, but out *in the open field.*⁵ *There shall Zion be rescued: there shall the Lord redeem her from the hand of her enemies.* Another ruler should arise, like David, not only in his military prowess, but in his humble origin. *Out of Bethlehem,* too small and insignificant to be reckoned among the families of Judah, *should come the governor,* who, assisted by a band of able captains, should drive the Assyrian from the land, and establish peace. But this is only a prelude to the religious reformation that will ensue; horses, chariots, fenced cities, strongholds, witchcrafts, soothsayers, images, pillars—all the paraphernalia of idolatrous superstition, all the evidences of a proud militarism, all the acquisitions of an effete civilization—will be *cut off and destroyed.*⁶

In Micah we have an astounding contrast to Isaiah; but the point we wish to emphasize at present is that both these prophets, so different

¹iii. 12. ²The insertion in iv. 10.

³ii. 5. Nowack gives reasons for considering the form in which this verse is preserved suspicious.

⁴i. 15.

⁵iv. 10.

⁶Micah v.

in temperament and environment, are at one in introducing their political conceptions into their delineations of the future.

The same principle admits of the most varied illustration. Jeremiah's description of the character of *the righteous Branch* whom the Lord *will raise unto David*¹ is obviously drawn in contradistinction to the unrighteous rulers of his own day.² Ezekiel in his ideal state is most careful to preserve and distinguish the various offices of sacred ministers,—Levites and priests—and introduces a prince to superintend the temple's ritual.³ Haggai is almost exclusively concerned with the building of the actual temple, and Zechariah recognizes the equal authority of the civil and religious heads of the restored community,⁴ and the visions in which he embodies his hopes for his country's future are full of similar political allusions. The second Isaiah not only pictures the future glory of Israel under the image of a procession of conquered slaves and tributaries bowing down before Zion in abject humiliation (in terms unmistakably drawn from Cyrus' conquest of Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba);⁵ but in thorough keeping with the spirit of Isaiah, the son of Amoz, emphasizes the happy government of the new Jerusalem. *I will appoint peace as thy government, and righteousness as thy ruler.*⁶ The anonymous author of the later chapters of

¹ Jer. xxii. 1-xxiii. 8.

² Cf. also Jer. iii. 15.

³ Ezek. xl.-xlviii., *passim*.

⁴ Cf. especially iii., iv. and vi. 13.

⁵ Isaiah xlv. 14-17 (but contrast the spontaneous homage of lx. and xlix.).

⁶ lx. 17.

Zechariah, like Isaiah, Ezekiel and Jeremiah, contrasts in the most vivid manner the good shepherd, whom the prophet is bidden to impersonate, with the wicked rulers of his day. Lastly Malachi, under different circumstances, directs his attention mainly to the priests who then formed the most important part of the reconstituted theocracy, laying the utmost stress on the moral qualifications for the priest's office, and anxiously expecting the time when the Lord should come *and purify the sons of Levi, that they might offer unto the Lord offerings in righteousness.*¹

We have now examined at length the national and political character of prophecy; but before proceeding to draw the conclusions which seem warranted by the evidence at our command, there are three further points which should receive notice.

First, there is the fact of political prediction. Few would deny that prediction forms a distinct, if only a subordinate, feature of prophecy. Now, though the prophets occasionally foretold the fate of individuals,² their predictions more usually concerned the state. In this connection their prophecies gradually assumed a fourfold character.

- (1) They predicted the inevitableness of national punishment.
- (2) That Jehovah would raise up a nation to execute his purpose.

¹ Mal. iii. 3.

² E.g. Amos predicted the death of Amaziah, Isaiah the fate of Shebna and Eliakim, Jeremiah that of Hananiah, Jehoiakim, and Ebed Melech; Ezekiel that of Zedekiah.

- (3) That this purpose included the salvation of a remnant of Israelites.
- (4) That as soon as the world-power transgressed the limits of Jehovah's decree, it would itself be subject to His high displeasure, manifested in signal judgments for its presumption.

These four ideas re-appear in one form or another in nearly all the canonical prophets, though their significance is continually changed by the different applications which different prophets made of them, to the varying circumstances of their own age.

Let us, however, examine a few predictions, of whose historical verification we can feel assured.

Amos predicted the captivity of the northern people, and the overthrow of the reigning dynasty, at a time when everything seemed to point in an opposite direction. It is true that a sagacious observer might have detected in the westward expansion of the Assyrian empire a sign that Israel would itself some day be brought into conflict with the armies of that irresistible country. But even supposing that Amos had had sufficient opportunities for political reflection, the certainty and definiteness of this announcement could hardly have seemed justified by the present state of national prosperity, while there was absolutely nothing to lead him to predict the downfall of Jeroboam's house.

Isaiah prophesied the overthrow of the Israelites and Syrians at the hands of the Assyrians, an event, indeed, which took place as he had asserted. But admitting for the sake of argument that this

may have been due to ordinary foresight,¹ the further question arises how he was able to hold two further beliefs, to all appearance mutually contradictory,—the necessity of the complete subjugation of Judah at the hands of the Assyrians, and at the same time her triumphant deliverance from the same power. Again and again he insists upon the necessity of a sweeping judgment on the city for its perversity and wickedness,² but no less frequently does he emphasize the certainty of a miraculous interposition which will cut down the enemies of Zion in the hour of their triumph. These two predictions are expressed in such emphatic and unqualified terms as to appear absolutely irreconcilable.³ But they were reconciled by the event. In the hour of her sorest need Jerusalem was delivered, and that in a manner transcending all human calculations,⁴ and accomplished without any human aid⁵ by a marvellous exhibition of Divine providence and power.

Jeremiah felt it his duty to dispel the illusory hopes that the false prophets were propagating as to the duration of the captivity. One in particular declared that the captivity would last but for two years, to which Jeremiah replied that it would last for two generations.⁶ The seventy years of Jeremiah—obviously only a round number—were fulfilled almost to the letter. This prophecy

¹ vii. xvii. ² xxix. 1-14.

³ Cf. iii. 17-26, v. 13, 26-30, vi. 11-13, vii. 17-25, viii. 5-8, xx., xxii. 1-14, xxxii. 9-14; and contrast viii. 9-10, x., xiv. 24-27, xvii. 12-14, xviii., xxix. 1-14, xxx. 27-33, xxxi., xxxvii. 1-8, 21-32, 33-35.

⁴ xxx. 14.

⁵ xxxi. 7-8.

⁶ Jer. xxviii.

is the more remarkable as we can see it contrasted with the optimistic speculations of a religious and national enthusiast.¹

Ezekiel also was made aware of the commencement of the siege of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar *in the ninth year, in the tenth month, in the tenth day of the month, i.e. January 10th, 589,*² a date confirmed in its minutest details from other sources. A still more striking instance of this species of revelation occurred when, by divine intimation, he was able to see the exact manner in which Zedekiah made his unsuccessful attempt to escape.³ It should be noted, however, that these visions of Ezekiel are not of the same character or value as the prophetic declarations already cited. More pertinent in this connection is his conviction that the theocracy would be re-established; and the fact that at a time when everything seemed to point to an opposite direction, he predicted the restoration of the Jews to their own land, the reorganization of the community on a definitely ecclesiastical basis, and the rebuilding of the Temple. Chimerical and impossible dreams of a religious fanatic they must have appeared to many of his contemporaries—but half a century sufficed for their fulfilment.

We are therefore here face to face with a *fact*

¹ The death of Hananiah, which Jeremiah also predicted would take place within the year as a punishment for his thoughtless mendacity, seems to have coincided with this prediction, but as it concerns an individual and is not capable of the same attestation as the other, we pass it over.

² Ezek. xxiv. 1.

³ Ezek. xii.

which is too well attested to be explained away by such rationalistic expedients as attributing these predictions to a process of simple calculation, or postulating a *vaticinium ex eventu*. Such groundless suppositions are obviously inadequate to account for the direct historical testimony available for the establishment of such prophecies. How then are we to explain this phenomenon? Some words of Prof. Sanday may be quoted in this connection, though they are capable of a far wider reference. "Upon what grounds are we to test the authority with which the prophets spoke—an authority which still breathes in their writings? They do not reason, but command. *They do not conjecture, but announce.* The moods which they use are the categorical imperative and future. Their insight takes the form of intuition and not of inference. Whence did they come to have these characteristics? What is it that lies in the background of their teaching? If we listen to them they will tell us."¹ What, then, do the prophets say? Let them answer in the words of Amos. *The Lord God doeth not anything but he revealeth his secret to his servants the prophets.* No other theory can possibly account for all the facts of which this sentence with its profound simplicity gives the completest and most convincing explanation. But granted the fact, has it any value for the Christian believer? Once more let us make the words of prophecy our own. The argument from prophecy was employed with the most telling effect long before the exigencies of controversy drove Christian

¹ *Inspiration*, p. 145.

controversialists to its somewhat indiscriminate use. *Who hath declared from the beginning, that we may know? And beforetime, that we may say, He is righteous? Yea, there is none that sheweth, yea, none that declareth, yea, none that heareth your words. I first have said to Zion, Behold, behold them.¹ Behold, the former things are come to pass, and new things do I declare: before they spring forth I tell you of them.² Let all the nations be gathered together, and let the people be assembled. Who among them can declare this, and show us former things? Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified. Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord . . . that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I am he.³ I am the first and the last, and beside me there is no God. And who, as I, shall call, and shall declare it, and set it in order for me?⁴ Who hath declared this from ancient time? Who hath told it from that time? Have not I the Lord? and no God else beside me?⁵ Remember the former things of old, for I am God and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done.⁶* We shall therefore be in complete accord with Scriptural precedent if we look upon these political predictions as constituting a very strong argument from prophecy, and as tending to establish the supernatural character of the revelation which they record.

Secondly, we should observe that the prophetic ideals received a very distinct fulfilment even in

¹ Isaiah xli. 26, 27 (cf. the whole chapter).

² xlii. 9. ³ xliii. 9-10. ⁴ xliv. 7. ⁵ xlv. 21. ⁶ xlvi. 9-10.

Old Testament times. Deuteronomy was the product of the prophetic school, and was designed to adapt the prophetic ideas to the circumstances of the Jewish state. In this it was phenomenally successful. Its discovery among the temple archives produced an immediate impression, and it was almost instantly adopted as a code of civil law. Now, the aim of Deuteronomy may be described as an attempt to realize in actual life the kingdom of God which had been the subject of the prophetic hopes and promises.

If its new view of sacrificial worship revolutionized, and for the time impoverished, the religion of daily life, it yet paved the way for a more spiritual type of worship; Josiah's reformation was the first stage in the substitution of the synagogue for the Temple, of prayer for sacrifice.¹ "It put in a tangible and easy shape at least one aspect of the prophetic teaching that the religion of ordinary life does not consist in ritual, but of love to God and obedience to Him,² and so prepared many in Israel to maintain their faith in Jehovah in the approaching dissolution of national life, when ritual service was not merely restricted in scope but altogether suspended."³

Again, the legislation of Deuteronomy is really based on the principles of universal morality, and the value of its teaching thus transcends all national and particularistic limitations and becomes co-extensive with humanity. "Nowhere does the fundamental religious thought of prophecy find clearer expression

¹ Ottley, *Hist. of Heb.*, 210.

² Cf. esp. x. 12.

³ W. R. Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, p. 368.

than in Deuteronomy,—the thought that Jehovah asks nothing for Himself, but asks it as a religious duty that man should render to man what is right, that His will lies not in any unknown height, but in the moral sphere which is known and understood by all (cf. Deut. xxx. 11-14)."¹

A precisely similar phenomenon to the fulfilment of the prophetic aspirations in Deuteronomy is afforded by Leviticus, the law-book of the "Hagiocracy" (as Ewald terms the restored community), which is apparently inspired by the desire to give practical effect to the ideals of Ezekiel. The latter had realized the paramount necessity of guarding Israel's distinctive character if she were not to be *swallowed up in the deep waters of the proud*.² Without going into the historical question as to the priority of Ezekiel and parts of the priestly code, we may assert that in many most important particulars the prophet's vision of the future was translated into the language of the present by those whose influence among the returned exiles was the greatest. It was Ezekiel who provided a practical solution for the difficult problem of the reinstatement of the dispossessed priests of the local sanctuaries by drawing a hitherto unknown distinction between Priests and Levites; it was Ezekiel who pointed to the temple and its worship as the central rallying point of Israel; it was Ezekiel who predicted, and prepared for the transformation of the nation into a Church; it was Ezekiel who, by his insistence on the value of all the peculiarly distinctive signs of Israel's vocation, as

¹ Wellhausen, *Isr. and Jud.*, 115.

² Psalm cxxiv.

well as by his own frequent use of allegorical symbolism, made possible the adoption of that phase of national and individual life in which rites of propitiation and purification occupied so significant a position. It was Ezekiel, moreover, who created the idea of a prince who should devote himself mainly, if not exclusively, to the effective administration of all the religious duties pertaining to his new office—an idea which very shortly bore fruit in the appearance of a “high priest.” And these ideas were enforced by the political organization no less than by the “priestly” compilations. It is easy to sneer at such conceptions as Levitical perversions of the prophetic ideal. We shall hope to show later how ill-advised such a description is, and that they not only rendered an inestimable service to the Jews in the preservation of their religion, but also played an important part in the religious development of mankind. But the point to which we wish to draw attention at this juncture is that Ezekiel’s prophecies did actually receive a very large measure of fulfilment in the form in which the Jewish state was ultimately reconstituted.

The last point which we must notice is the true meaning of politics in this connection. We have observed more than once that true prophecy was bound to assume a political character, not only because the state rather than the individual was regarded as the ideal unit, but also because in the successes and reverses of their country men had been taught to read the lessons of hope and warning which Jehovah would have each individual member of the state lay to heart. We would therefore once

more enter an energetic protest against the still common view that the terms "religious" and "political" embody two totally contradictory conceptions. That such is not the case is, however, becoming recognized by most modern critics, though it can hardly yet be said to have been boldly accepted as a maxim of universal application. We may, however, quote the words of one who has striven in a pre-eminent degree to interpret the prophets in the light of the circumstances in which they lived and thought and toiled. "From a modern standpoint," says Duhm,¹ "we should view the politics and history of a state as extraneous matter; but if the state *qua* state was so all-important for the old Israelitish religion, and if we may confidently anticipate that prophecy embraced or traversed every point of religious life or light, then we may reckon 'politics' as the most important religious material that we have to handle."

We can now proceed to draw some most important conclusions, as the result of our investigation into the national and political character of Old Testament prophecy.

We have not conducted our enquiry without regard to the main purpose of this essay, namely, to ascertain the evidential value of Old Testament prophecy. On the contrary, it is because facts and not theories are needed for an accurate appreciation of the value of the prophetic literature that we have

¹ Duhm, *Theologie der Propheten*, p. 66.

examined at such length its most salient features, and most characteristic limitations. We shall never understand the value of prophecy for any purpose until we understand prophecy itself. And when treating it from so difficult and delicate a point of view as that involved in an endeavour to rightly estimate its apologetic use, it becomes essential to approach the subject not in accordance with our own *a priori* considerations, but as far as possible from the standpoint of the prophets themselves; to notice what it is they are trying to accomplish, what it is they claim to effect, and what are the limitations they impose upon themselves.

Of such limitations none is more obvious than the fact that the prophets as a rule deal with nations rather than with individuals, and that a very considerable portion of their writings is exclusively occupied with forecasts of the fate of their own or foreign countries. Now, if we would ascertain the true essence of any prophecy we must resolutely discard all the national forms in which it is clothed. These forms belong plainly to the prophet's own day. They were the means he used for conveying his message in a practical, definite form to his hearers. The prophet must not be regarded as a kind of instrument for the mechanical enunciation of startling topical predictions. Prophecy is rather a dynamical force. The prophet was a *man*, and, as man, was endowed with powers of reason and reflection. So that in all prophetic utterances we may take it for granted that the general idea preceded the special application. Thus no prophet foresaw as by an infallible intuition that *Jerusalem*

would be delivered from Assyria, or destroyed by Babylon. It was far otherwise. The prophets had events and circumstances to go upon, they possessed a knowledge of God's character ; meditating upon such things—and we do not deny that they were assisted by what is commonly called supernatural enlightenment—they came to certain conclusions as to the ways of God, which they then applied to the circumstances in which they found themselves placed. Thus *Jerusalem will be delivered from Assyria* is not to be regarded as an isolated prediction of an unreasoning patriot. It was but the conclusion that the prophet drew from convictions which lay at the root of all his spiritual experience and religious teaching. The bare assertion may be somewhat expanded as follows : "God has chosen Israel. He has a purpose for her. Israel has forgotten her God, so He must punish her, but He will not destroy her. His purpose shall stand. He will punish her. The means He will employ are not far to seek. The Assyrian is already at the door. But pride, too, must be punished, and the Assyrian is proud. He does not realize that he is but a tool in Jehovah's hand. So he, too, must be taught that there is One who can put down the mighty from their seat. Therefore the Assyrian will be humiliated and Sion, after *her* humiliation, be exalted, and thus will the power and love of God be completely vindicated." And, similarly, Jeremiah's announcement that *Jerusalem must be destroyed by the Chaldeans* is not to be attributed to the gloomy forebodings of a despairing fatalist. He too reaches this conclusion after considering the character of Jehovah, and how

that character has been revealed in history. "God is holy. He demands perfect holiness. *He tries the reins and the heart.* Where His holy purpose is obstinately opposed, He will Himself remove the obstacle. Jerusalem has as far as she could frustrated God. She must therefore be destroyed. The means are obvious. Else, what means this approach of Nebuchadnezzar with his hosts? Jerusalem must fall into his hands."

Not a few important consequences, flow from a frank recognition of the entirely subsidiary character of this national element. We see that for the real value of prophecy it is entirely immaterial. The prophets passionately declared that might was *not* right, that he *whose might was his God* was bound to fail, that *the just man should live by his faith.* It is, in this case, the principles rather than the predictions of the prophets which are all important. Their convictions needed to be expressed in intelligible forms, and applied to their actual surroundings. But for us it makes not one jot of difference whether Babylon remained *uninhabited for ever* or whether it was partially rebuilt or entirely restored; whether a Jewish conqueror ever did or did not *come from Bozrah* with his apparel steeped in Idumean blood; whether Tyre did or did not withstand any particular siege; whether Cyrus was or was not a worshipper of Jehovah; whether a tremendous battle ever did or ever will verify the anticipations of an Ezekiel or Zechariah. These are but the shell, we must penetrate to the kernel. What are the religious truths to which the prophets give this outward and at times very unspiritual expression?

The answer is, that God has *a selection according to purpose*: that He has chosen the Jews to be the bearers of this true religion to mankind: that He operates through historical circumstances: that righteousness must in the end triumph: that no policy can thwart His purpose, and no power crush the faith that trusts in Him.

Have these prophetic convictions been verified? That the Jews were indeed a chosen people is universally conceded. The three great monotheistic faiths have sprung from that soil. Nor can a Christian ever forget that it is a Jew—as concerning the flesh—whom the world reverences as her highest teacher. But are not other races chosen too? Yes, and chosen for religious ends? To the first question we may return an unconditional, to the second a qualified affirmative. While not denying the providentially permitted influence of other faiths in the history of religious development, we may well ask, who would wish to exchange Christianity for the practical atheism of Rome, for the cultured scepticism of Greece, or the popular mythology of Egypt? Surely the prophets can appeal to the testimony of history as bearing witness to the truth of their unshaken belief in the Divine vocation of Israel. But even if this is admitted, another criticism obtrudes itself. Is righteousness a real factor in the history of nations? Can it even be said to have been vindicated in the history of the Jewish nation? When Christ was born, was not an Idumean king upon the throne? Was this a conquest over Edom? But, we may reply, did Herod, styled the Great, wield the influence of that Other, *born king of the Jews*?

His crown, it is true, was composed of thorns, His throne was the cross, yet while the former succeeded in forcing the inhabitants of Judea to yield a grudging recognition to his odious tyranny, the latter continues to exercise His beneficent sway over millions of willing subjects, and claims the universal homage of civilized mankind. But was not the kingdom of God overpowered by violence? Was not the Edomite sovereignty of the Herods succeeded by the hated oppression of Rome? And did not the Jewish state go down in an appalling catastrophe, whose unparalleled horrors marked the irretrievable character of its fall? But to answer one question by another, Was the old theocracy destroyed before a new Israel was ready to take its place? And did either popular fury or judicial persecution, backed by all the resources of the mighty Empire, avail aught to stop its progress and extension? Can we not see here the crowning instance of that doctrine which the prophets never ceased to urge upon their contemporaries that *he that believeth should not make haste*? Here truly could all men see before their eyes the victory of that *faith which overcometh the world*. When once we fully realize the dispensational and circumstantial character of the language in which the prophets embodied these magnificent hopes, we shall the more easily be able to concentrate our attention on the permanent elements of religious truth which they contain. We are filled with a kind of despairing wonder at their glorious idealism. But when we find these ideals corroborated by the facts of history, we cease to ask how it was that these men—the despised religious leaders of a petty

state—were enabled to grasp with so firm a hold principles so high and ennobling. Our astonishment yields to awe; our wonder passes into a certainty, that they did indeed hear from Jehovah the words they profess to have heard—that He did indeed *speak to them and reveal himself in their ears*: that though clothed in the language and suited to the associations of the age in which they lived, their oracles are nevertheless imperishable, because they do most truly contain *the word of God that endureth for ever*.

If a further proof were needed for our assertion, an additional argument may be drawn from those very definite predictions of certain political events which admitted of direct verification in the prophets' own lifetime. They are not to be dismissed as shrewd guesses at the political situation, nor, on the other hand, can we regard them as supernatural communications conveyed to the prophet during a suspension of his natural faculties. They do, no doubt, postulate a distinct apprehension of political tendencies; they also embody conclusions at which the prophet could not have arrived unaided by Divine power. What they prove, however, is this, that the prophets had so completely identified their own aspirations with what they knew of Jehovah's will and purpose that they were enabled to know and declare beforehand the exact manner in which that will and purpose would find its accomplishment.

But if we may argue from the fulfilment of some predictions, as to their Divine character, may not the non-fulfilment of others be used to stultify the argument? Scripture itself proposes fulfilment as a

test of veracity.¹ The objection is valid only when we forget the conditional character of prophecy. For prophecy was directed to a moral rather than to a miraculous end. It had for its object the reformation of the sinner, not its own glorification by the coming to pass of the sinner's doom which it had predicted. Nowhere is this lesson taught with greater force and beauty and, we may add, pathos than in the book of Jonah. The prophet was commanded to preach the downfall of Nineveh *for the wickedness of them that dwelt therein*.² He did so—with tardy zeal, and, we cannot help surmising, with a latent feeling of pleasure in the certainty that his fame would be vastly increased by the fulfilment of the impending judgment. Only forty days remained, but so effective was his preaching that, as one man, the whole city was moved to repentance: *They turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil which he said he would do unto them, and he did it not. But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was angry*.³ He felt that his mission had been a huge failure, when it really had achieved an extraordinary success. Yes, he did *well to be angry*. What was the fate of this great population in comparison with his own prophetic reputation? But in a simple parable from nature God taught him the great lesson that *his mercy is over all his works*; ⁴ and that, as another prophet declared, *he hath no pleasure in the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live*.⁵ Jeremiah had already expressly taught the same doctrine. *At what instant I shall*

¹ Deut. xviii. 21-22.

² Ps. cvii. 34.

³ Jon. iii. 10, iv. 1.

⁴ Ps. cxlv. 9.

⁵ Ezekiel xviii.

speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom to pluck up and to break down and to destroy it—if that nation concerning which I have spoken, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them. And what instant I shall speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom to build and to plant it, if it do evil in my sight that it obey not my voice, then I will repent of the good wherewith I said I would benefit them. Nowe, therefore, go, speak to the men of Judah. Thus saith the Lord. Behold I frame evil against you, return ye now every one from his evil way.¹ And the same prophet's supporters pointed to the preaching of Micah as producing so great an effect that his absolutely unconditional threats were not fulfilled, or at any rate that their fulfilment was indefinitely postponed.²

So from Scripture itself we learn that the test of fulfilment is not the only one available for estimating the evidential value of prophecy. But while we are speaking of the conditional element which enters so largely into all the preaching of the prophets, we should also notice the ideal character of many of their representations. "No one can seriously pretend that if Israel had only exhibited a perfect faithfulness to his God" (yet how great the assumption involved in these words!) "it would have been possible in every instance for the Messianic salvation to appear as soon as, and precisely in the manner in which the prophets announced."³ The prophets were poets, and made use of poetic figures in which to clothe their own inspired imagination. We must not, however, confine this

¹ Jer. xviii. 7-11.

² xxvi. 19.

³ Riehm, 223.

poetic element to those ideal descriptions of nature which we recognize to be impossible. It pervades the whole region of prophecy, and provides us with another obvious limitation to the fulfilment of certain predictions.

Some further considerations call for remark.

(1) The political character of prophecy is most clearly discerned by making a tripartite division of the prophetic activity. First we noticed how earnestly the prophets laboured for the establishment of a kingdom of God upon earth, that is to say they looked for and toiled for the erection of a state where the will of God should be the all-determining norm in every phase of civil and social life. Their labours were not unrewarded. Both Deuteronomy and Leviticus show us what a resolute and, on the whole, successful effort was made to carry out the programme that the prophets laid down for the practical guidance of the people in political matters, even though the result did not correspond exactly to its prophetic origin.¹ Now this is a fact which is constantly overlooked by both defenders and impugnors of prophetic revelation. The former think to establish the evidential value of prophecy by pointing out that hopes so glorious and fruitful were both unrealized and unrealizable in the days of the Jewish commonwealth, and that their non-fulfilment then prepared the way for their fulfilment afterward—that otherwise “we should have felt a numbing sense of incompleteness and failure: we should have been compelled to say that the prophets could not really have been what they claimed to be, the mouth-

¹ Wellhausen, *Is. and Jud.*, 115.

piece of an unique Divine revelation.”¹ The latter starting from the same premises, point to the fact that even under the Christian dispensation the prophet’s dreams of civil and social righteousness apparently remain as unattainable as ever. Both start from the assumption that in their own day the ideals of prophecy were either completely unfulfilled, or received at the most only a very “partial accomplishment.” This view we feel bound to dispute. The prophets were men of their own time, and to men of their own time they addressed their message. The prophets were active members of a political state, and in that state they expected, and received, the fulfilment of their hopes. It is, indeed, impossible to overestimate the unbounded influence of the prophets even in the political sphere of Israel’s development. For the Jews had again and again “gone through crises calculated to destroy both their existence and their religion. It is not difficult to discern the agency by which the peril was averted. That agency was prophecy.”² It is to Isaiah that Judah owed the prolongation of her independence when the sister kingdom was ruthlessly swept away. It is to the preaching of the prophets that Deuteronomy owed its origin, and thus it was from the prophets that the state accepted her code of civil laws and statutes. It was from their appreciation of prophetic doctrines that the Israelites derived the power to withstand the captivity and exile. It was the influence of the prophets that preserved both the nation and the national religion from the more insidious attacks

¹ Kirkpatrick, *D. of P.*, 520.

² *Lux Mundi* (Ed. 1902), p. 118.

of Hellenistic culture. We may, therefore, justly claim a very large measure of fulfilment for prophecy apart from Christianity, and when we take into consideration the object for which the religion and nation of Israel were preserved, we shall realize that what the prophets accomplished *in their own day*, is of the very greatest importance in giving us a high sense of the evidential value of Old Testament prophecy.

(2) The prophets as politicians did not confine their attention to the internal administration of their own country, but naturally took the keenest interest also in its foreign affairs. We have already endeavoured to show the true significance of the national prophecies. But we may here notice one particular aspect of this nationalism which has excited much controversy, namely, the promise of a complete and final restoration of the Jews to their own country. Here we are again confronted with an "unfulfilled prophecy," one, moreover, which recurs with the most astonishing frequency throughout the whole of the Old Testament, and is not unconnected with the eschatological conceptions of the New. Here, again, we are invited to recognize a great prophetic failure; and the usual line adopted by apologists is that the predicted event will yet come to pass;—when and how, the day will declare. But surely we cannot be contented with such an explanation. The literal Canaan had a very real meaning for the early Israelites. The possession of the land was the guarantee of national independence: it further symbolized the favour and protection of God, while captivity and exile argued His anger and

displeasure.¹ The prophets, therefore, when they promised a complete restoration, were merely expressing their conviction that the nation, *quâ* nation, would not be destroyed, but would yet have an opportunity of fulfilling its proper destiny in the quiet possession of their own inheritance. Taking into account those conditional and ideal elements which enter so largely into every prophetic threat or promise, we cannot but see how wonderfully this hope was fulfilled. As long as the preservation of the Jewish nation was necessary in the interests of true religion, there was never wanting a restored community in Judea to keep alive the national life and worship. Further, those spiritual truths which the inheritance of Canaan typified,—rest within and without, final victory over all that is evil, and the presence of God with His people—have been more than verified in the experience of the Christian Church. The literalistic interpretation which insists upon a territorial restoration forgets that the prophets could only make their beliefs intelligible by expressing them in the language of contemporary events and expectations. To be consistent, the advocates of this kind of exegesis should insist upon the certain fulfilment of the other details in the prophetic picture,—vanquished Philistines and slaughtered Edomites, Egypt devastated and Assyria humiliated, Ethiopia *in chains*² and Moab *in the water of the dunghill*.³ But if these nationalities are spiritualized into typical conceptions, why

¹ A recognition of this fact lies at the bottom of the Assyrian deportations of conquered nationalities; cf. 1 Sam xxvi. 9; 2 Ks. xvii. 2-3.

² Is. lxv. 14.

³ Is. xxv. 10, 11.

should Israel and the land of Canaan be exempted from a similar process? Is it not a far truer view to see in all these prophetic utterances a kind of spiritual realism? The images were real enough to the prophets, because they embodied spiritual truths which are still real for us. Where the circumstances have completely altered, there we may legitimately expect a corresponding alteration in the form in which the prophecy will finally be fulfilled. May we not, indeed, go so far as to say that the reality of the message to the prophets' contemporaries is the measure of its truth to ourselves; but that the external application *must* undergo very material modification if we are to conserve its spiritual significance for our own times? The territorial restoration is no more clearly predicted than universal dominion or spiritual supremacy, or the complete re-organization of the Temple worship. If we seek for a yet further fulfilment of such predictions than that which they have already received in Jewish history, let us ever keep before us the prophet's words, *Behold I create a new heaven and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered nor come into mind.*¹

(3) Lastly, we observed the attitude of the prophets to existing institutions. Here, again, we meet with numerous instances of historical adaptation. What is true to one, is false to another. This may especially be seen in Jeremiah's uncompromising denunciation of the one-sided patriotism which based itself on the Isaianic doctrine of the inviolability of Zion.² Now it was the object of all prophecy to

¹ Is. lxx. 17.

² Jer. vii.

set forth the true relation between God and man. This the prophets did in the terms with which they were familiar. As long as national independence was still a fact, their hopes naturally centred in the idea of a kingdom and the person of its king. But in the exile, though the king is occasionally mentioned, he does not occupy the same prominence, because in actual fact he no longer exists, and another person has taken his place in the work of regenerating and consolidating Israel's national and religious life.¹ The prophet, therefore, becomes the central figure of exilic prophecy, which, unable to fix its attention on the kingship, or the priesthood—as both state and sacrifice had ceased to exist—became introspective and examined the meaning of its own office and mission. To the same cause we may assign the prominence of the idea of the new covenant which meets us first in Jeremiah. But the exile did not last for ever. The exiles returned, and the theocracy was re-erected on the lines which prophecy had already suggested in anticipation of such an event. As all affairs of state were practically in the hands of a Persian governor, the people were free to apply themselves to religious interests—and so we find prophecy very largely concerned with the priestly office and the building of the temple as the centre of the restored community—and it is from this period that the king and the prophet become merged in the high priest, who henceforth stands before God as the religious representative of the people.

The law giving this contemporary character to

¹ *E.g.* in Is. xl.-lxvi. the king is not even mentioned.

Messianic prophecy is formulated by Riehm in the following terms: "The prophets make particular factors in the organism of the Old Testament theocracy the objects of their Messianic oracles, in proportion as they are able, at the time, to exercise a decisive influence upon the realization of the idea of the kingdom of God, and similarly they concern themselves with the different national and theocratic interests, according to the measure of importance which they have in the circumstances of the actual present for the kingdom of God. In different periods, consequently, of the history of the old covenant, now one and now another of the ideas contained in the Old Testament religion, and embodied in the Old Testament theocracy, forms the principal starting point of Messianic prophecy, and the principal source of its peculiar content."¹

With this conclusion we find ourselves in the most whole-hearted agreement, for it is in spiritual correspondence rather than in literal verification that we must seek the evidential value of Old Testament prophecy.

It is sometimes brought as an argument against the Divine origin and authenticity of prophecy that it is not consistent in its representations of its own ideals. The charge is a shallow one, as it is based only upon a superficial study of the sacred writings. The prophets are really dominated by one single conception—the union of God and man. But instead of banishing this ideal into the far-off and misty regions of abstract speculation, they make it a real and living belief to their contemporaries by adapting it to

¹ *Mess. Proph.*, p. 178.

the ever varying needs and requirements of the age in which they are placed. There is no inconsistency here, but a perfectly consistent scheme of interpretative adaptation, in which those who have ears to hear can easily distinguish the voice of God speaking to man, albeit in many parts and in many fashions.

We have now concluded our examination into the limitations of prophecy. We have seen the necessity of taking due account of those national, political, conditional and ideal elements which constitute so prominent a part of the prophetic message, and at the same time explain so many of its characteristic peculiarities. We have endeavoured to show that a due recognition of these elements does not preclude the possibility of prophecy being both divine in its origin and in the end for which it prepared. This is in the main a negative result, but we hope that we have also established some positive conclusions. For those very limitations which surround the prophetic idea of the kingdom of God were seen to contain not a few indications of a Divine economy—that is to say, that even if the prophets were wholly immersed in contemporary politics, even if we were to eliminate from their writings all traces of those weighty conceptions which still await our investigation, and banish from their religious convictions all outlook into the future, even if we were to isolate their activity in the present and predictions of the future from the *facts* of Christianity to which they stand in the most intimate relation, we should yet be justified in claiming that their writings contain sufficient materials to warrant our asserting in the strongest terms the evidential value of Old Testament prophecy.

§ IV. THE KINGDOM OF GOD. THE PROPHETIC EXPANSION OF ITS SUPRANATIONAL CHARAC- TERISTICS.

IT will be remembered that Isaiah in his inaugural vision had not only been impressed with the awful holiness of Jehovah in its relation to Israel, but had also realized the diffusion of His glory throughout the whole earth and the certainty of the ultimate triumph of the Divine purpose. He thus added to the narrower nationalistic conception of the theocratic kingdom those elements of universality and eternity, into whose place and significance in prophetic literature we shall now proceed to inquire. In doing so we shall make frequent reference to the Psalter—not only because it was composed by men thoroughly imbued with the prophetic spirit, but also because, by translating the prophetic hopes into the language of poetry, which from its liturgical use no less than from its intrinsic beauty took the strongest hold on the popular imagination, they familiarized the people with the Messianic ideals of prophecy.

Now when once men began to realize what was involved in the idea of Jehovah's holiness—namely, the establishment of a righteous kingdom of God upon earth—it was as natural as it was easy to lift the idea of the theocracy above all national

limitations. Righteousness was not a Palestinian production, nor could the fruits of righteousness thrive only in the soil of Canaan. When the king should arise,¹ endued with *righteousness* by God, to *judge his people with righteousness*, then would *righteousness flourish*,² then *with righteousness would the mountains and hills bring peace for the people, yea, abundance of peace till the moon is no more*, that is to say, for all time. Nor shall any hostile forces disturb this peaceful ideal. *His enemies shall lick the dust*, while "the most remote and the most wealthy nations unite in honouring the righteous king,"³ who is conceived as ruling over an empire co-extensive with the civilized world. Thus righteousness is crowned with *universal dominion*. Here then we meet with those three characteristics of this reign of perfect righteousness which are to be found in all the prophetic descriptions of the glory of the latter days. Righteousness issues in peace: and this peace is as universal and eternal as righteousness itself.

But to the fulfilment of these hopes, the condition of Israel itself presented an insuperable barrier. We do not here refer to those moral and social evils for whose removal the prophets laboured so long and so earnestly. There was an external obstacle, continued existence of which threatened to dissipate all those glorious dreams of future happiness.

Though composed of unmistakably heterogeneous elements, Israel never lost its sense of constituting an ideal unity. This receives a very remarkable illustra-

¹ Ps. lxxii. ; cf. Is. xxxii.

² So LXX, Jer., Syr.

³ Kirkpatrick, *Psalms*, 421.

tion from the history of the judges—written, as were all the historical books, from a distinctly prophetic standpoint. Nothing is more obvious than that the conquest and occupation of Canaan was far more the work of individual tribes than that of the nation as a whole.¹ The judges raised up for the deliverance of the people are in reality only the deliverers of their own land or tribe. But the historian persistently views their achievements in the light of national successes. Thus in his representation of the nation's sin, bondage and deliverance, it is always *the children of Israel that did evil in the sight of the Lord*; and whether the tribes of the North or of the South or of the East are delivered from their enemies, in every case it is *Israel* that is saved.² That this was the view not only of the historian, but also of the people whose history he interprets and records, is proved by the language of Deborah's song, who claims to be a *mother in Israel* though she makes absolutely no mention whatever of Judah.³

The unity of the people was the direct consequence of the unity of the God they worshipped; and we have seen cause to suppose that, as this unity became more marked in consequence of the consolidation of the nation in the reign of David, men's minds may have dwelt on its religious significance. They seem to have felt that as Israel and Judah had a common worship, so they had a common destiny, which was incapable of complete realization, unless the whole nation applied itself whole-heartedly to its fulfilment. The disruption of the kingdom must

¹ Contrast Judges i. with the account of the conquest in Joshua.

² Judges *passim*.

³ Judges v. 7.

have come as a great blow to many devout minds who had begun to dream of a great future for Israel. The effects of the disruption were accentuated by the adoption, on the part of the rulers of the northern kingdom, of a religious policy which was intended to differentiate yet more sharply the two sections into which the nation had been split. This resulted in a complete religious and political separation between the two kingdoms.

But from both a religious and political standpoint efforts were made to bring about a reunion, or, at any rate, a more conciliatory attitude. Thus we have two instances of Judean prophets interesting themselves in the religious affairs of the northern kingdom, one condemning the schismatical, the other the immoral character of the worship that Jeroboam had instituted at Bethel,¹ while some of the kings seem to have entered into friendly relations with their brother monarchs, though the lack of detail in this connection makes the exact position of the two respective countries somewhat obscure.² But the minds of men still recurred to the memories of the Davidic kingdom, though the policy of friendship and alliance inaugurated by the kings of the Omri dynasty was succeeded, at the extinction of the latter at the hands of Jehu, by a renewed outbreak of hostilities. It is very noticeable in this connection that Hosea most emphatically condemns

¹ Amos and the nameless prophet in 1 Kings xiii. 1-32. On this passage Burney remarks: "If the story be merely a very late Judean fiction, the point of the details as to the disobedience and punishment of the Judean prophet seems to be quite inexplicable." *Kings*, 180.

² *E.g.* it has been supposed that Jehoshaphat followed Ahab to Ramoth Gilead as a vassal.

the sanguinary revolution which placed Jehu on the throne.¹ It is this same prophet who is the first to express a hope that the two kingdoms will be reunited. Amos recognizes *the brotherly covenant* subsisting between Tyre and Israel,² and the brotherly feeling that should be displayed by Edom towards Israel,³ and he is aware of the ideal unity of *the whole family which the Lord brought up from the land of Egypt*,⁴ but nowhere has he a word of condemnation for the division of the kingdom, while his sole allusion to David is of the most incidental character.⁵ But from Hosea onwards we meet with this idea again and again. For when in the days to come they shall receive pity and become once more the people of Jehovah, *the children of Judah and the children of Israel shall be gathered together, and they shall appoint unto themselves one head*.⁶ For as Judah and Ephraim are one in sin, and one in Divine chastisement,⁷ so shall they be one in repentance and forgiveness. *Afterward shall the children of Israel return and seek the Lord their God, and David their king, and shall come with fear unto the Lord and to his goodness in the latter days*.⁸

Isaiah does not allow the horrors of civil war⁹ to exclude this hope from his vision of the future. There was, indeed, little enough in the circumstances of his day to justify such an expectation. It was a time when *every man ate the flesh of his neighbour*,¹⁰

¹ Hosea i. 4. ² Amos i. 9, 10. ³ Amos i. 11, 12. ⁴ Amos iii. 1.

⁵ vi. 5. As the inventor of instruments of secular music. There seem overwhelming reasons for doubting the genuineness of ix. 11-15.

⁶ Hos. i. 11. ⁷ Hos. v. 8-14. ⁸ Hos. iii. 5. ⁹ Isaiah vii. 7.

¹⁰ Reading רעו רעו for רעו רעו.

*Manasseh, Ephraim ; and Ephraim, Manasseh ; and they together against Judah.*¹ But in the days of the righteous ruler who will yet arise, *Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim.*²

When, however, the captivity of the northern tribes had effectually silenced all thoughts of envy and jealousy, bitter memories were softened and kinder feelings revived, and the return of the captive tribes came to be more and more ardently desired in the prophetic delineations of the time of *the restoration of all things*. Thus Jeremiah, confronted with the melancholy fact that *back-sliding Israel hath shown herself more righteous than treacherous Judah*,³ and convinced that his own people, too, must for their sins share the fate of their exiled brethren, cries, *Return, thou back-sliding Israel . . . and I will bring you to Zion, and I will give you shepherds according to mine heart.*⁴ And in response to his appeal he hears voices of penitence and prayer borne over the bare heights of Ephraim.⁵ *It shall come to pass in those days the house of Judah shall walk with the house of Israel, and they shall come together out of the land of the north to the land that I have given for an inheritance unto your fathers.*⁶ And at a later period, he once more predicts their restoration, in words full of the deepest pathos. *Is Ephraim my dear son ? Is he a pleasant child ?*⁷

¹ Isaiah ix. 21.

² Isaiah xi. 13, but see additional note at end of this chapter.

³ Jer. iii. 11. ⁴ iii. 12-14. ⁵ iii. 22-25. ⁶ iii. 18.

⁷ The best explanation of this question (ignored by LXX) is that Jehovah, as it were, asks Himself in amazement whether He can still love His rebellious child. יִשְׂרָאֵל answers the question in the affirmative.

*For as often as I speak against him, do I remember him still. Therefore my heart is troubled for him. I will surely have mercy upon him, saith the Lord.*¹ And, again, in the same chapter he predicts that *there shall be a day that the watchmen upon the walls of Ephraim shall cry, Arise ye, and let us go to Zion.*² *For, saith the Lord, I am a father to Israel, and Ephraim is my first-born.*³

The same thought finds beautiful expression in the Asaphite psalms, which are especially "distinguished by their prophetic character."⁴ Here we see the true deduction drawn from Jeremiah's teaching. If God loved Ephraim as a father, Judah must love him as a brother. And so, Judah when praying for his own restoration,⁵ likewise prays for the restoration of his brethren, of *Ephraim and Benjamin and Manasseh*,⁶ "who were united by the tie of their common descent from Jacob's beloved wife, Rachel, who is regarded by Jeremiah (xxx. 15) as the mother of the northern kingdom."⁷

Ezekiel is, if possible, even more emphatic. In the magnificent vision of the valley of dry bones, to which we shall have occasion to refer later, he is careful to state that it is the resurrection of *the whole house of Israel*⁸ which the vision is intended to typify.

¹ Jer. xxxi. 20.

² xxxi. 6.

³ *Ibid.* 9.

⁴ Kirkpatrick, *Book of Psalms*, p. 428.

⁵ The omission of Judah can only be accounted for on the hypothesis that it is Judah himself who is praying. Cf. Baethgen, *Handkommentar, Psalmen*, p. 247.

⁶ Ps. lxxx. 2. Cf. also lxxvii. 15, lxxx. 5.

⁷ Kirkpatrick, *Psalms*, 484.

⁸ Ezekiel xxxvii. 11.

But in case this should not be enough, he is directed to perform a highly symbolical action. *And thou, son of man, take thou one stick and write upon it—For Judah and for the children of Israel, his companions: then take another stick and write upon it—For Joseph and the children of Israel, his companions: and join them one to another into one stick that they may become one in thine hand.*¹ The meaning is obvious, but even to those that are without, an interpretation is given, so that none might miss the significance of the act. *Say unto them, thus saith the Lord God. Behold I will take the children of Israel from among the nations . . . and bring them into their own land . . . and I will make them one nation in the land upon the mountains of Israel . . . and they shall be no more two nations neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all . . . and I will cleanse them . . . so shall they be my people, and I will be their God . . . and my servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd.*²

After so clear an enunciation of the Divine purpose, we cannot wonder that the idea became almost a commonplace among the later Jews. It is to this cause that we must attribute the probable insertion in Nahum ii. 2, which reads—*For the Lord bringeth again the excellency of Jacob, as the excellency of Israel*³—and the fact that Obadiah, though apparently dealing with the vengeance that Edom deserved, and would receive at the hands of Judah,

¹ Ezekiel 16, 17.

² *Ibid.* xxxvii. 21-24.

³ This is plainly an insertion as it interrupts the continuity of the passage. Cf. Nowack *in loco*, p. 259.

yet expects the territorial restoration of both the house of Jacob, and the house of Joseph.¹

But this expectation was once more to find utterance before the voice of prophecy altogether ceased. The nameless author of the concluding chapters of Zechariah endeavoured, by the allegory of the good shepherd, to give a practical exposition of his belief that the Lord *would strengthen the house of Judah and save the house of Joseph.*² The prophet was bidden to impersonate a good and wise ruler, and as a faithful shepherd to *feed the poor of the flock.*³ He had taken two staves—*Beauty and Bands*—but in despair, he broke them both. We now see what *Bands* signified. *I cut asunder my staff, even Bands, that I might break the brotherhood between Judah and Israel.*⁴

Thus the re-union of Israel was a hope very dear to more than one prophet's heart. They felt that "man's self-will cannot permanently make void the Divine idea of all Israel,"⁵ and it is a significant clue to the understanding of the prophetic ideal, to find that this hope is constantly connected with the figure of a shepherd, ruling and feeding the people in the name of his God. Thus re-united Israel will be able fully to enter into the blessings and privileges of the perfected theocracy.

Of these none was considered a more certain consequence of the dawn of the Messianic age than the establishment of a profound peace. It is easy to understand the intense longing with which all who

¹ Obadiah 17, 21.

² Zech. x. 6. Cf. ix. 13.

³ Zech. xi. 7.

⁴ xi. 14.

⁵ Cheyne, quoted by Kirkpatrick in *Psalms*, C.B.S. 483.

waited for the consolation of Israel must have turned from the endless warfares and tribal feuds with which every Israelite was so painfully familiar, to look for a time when *the Lord should give his people the blessing of peace.*¹

At every stage of national life this hope reasserted itself with undiminished intensity. David, exhausted with continuous wars, gave the name of Solomon—the Peaceful one—to the son for whom he entertained such high expectations, *for in his days the Lord would give peace and quietness to Israel.*² Hosea, amid the anarchy of northern Israel, sighed for the time when God should *break the bow and the sword and the battle out of the earth and make them to lie down safely.*³ Micah looks for a ruler to come out of Bethlehem to roll back the tide of Assyrian invasion. *And this man shall be our peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land.*⁴ Isaiah, too, feels confident that when Jehovah has utterly destroyed the Assyrian and burnt their weapons of warfare, a child shall be born to sit on David's throne. *Great shall his kingdom be, and peace shall have no end.*⁵ In fact, this is so marked a characteristic of his reign that he will actually be called the *Prince of peace.*⁷ Again,

¹ יברך את עמו בשלום, Ps. xxix. 11.

² 1 Chron. xxii. 9.

³ Hos. ii. 18.

⁴ Micah v. 5.

⁵ LXX reads μεγαλήν ἢ ἀρχήν (Heb. לְמַרְכָּבָה הַמְשָׁרָה). This seems the right reading. מַרְכָּבָה is very doubtful for this period, and the לַם (the use of the final ם itself points to some textual dislocation) is easily explained as dittography of the preceding שָׁלֹם. We read accordingly מַרְכָּבָה הַמְשָׁרָה.

⁶ Is. ix. 6.

⁷ Is. ix. 5.

in a later chapter he paints a picture of peace which, it has been justly said, has ever since haunted the world like a dream which it cannot shake off;¹ and when the Assyrian forces had been shattered—the Psalmist draws the practical conclusion—*O, come hither and behold the works of Jehovah, who hath set astonishments in all the earth! He maketh wars to cease in all the world; he breaketh the bow, and knappeth the spear in sunder and burneth the chariot in the fire.*² The idea was so firmly rooted in Israel's conception of the latter days that it soon became the commonplace of convention rather than of conviction. The false prophets cried *Peace, peace, when there was no peace*,³ and Jeremiah was tempted to doubt whether, after all, the idea was divinely communicated to the earlier prophets. *Ah, Lord God, surely thou hast greatly deceived this people and Jerusalem, saying, Ye shall have peace; whereas the sword reacheth unto the soul.*⁴ Yet even he was brought to see that God would *bring health and cure* to that which he had declared to be incurable, and *abundance of peace and truth*, where he had thought no peace would ever be possible.⁵ Nahum sees in the fate of Nineveh an occasion for welcoming the bearer of the news to Judah, as *one that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace.*⁶ Ezekiel, no less than Jeremiah, looks forward to the establishment of a *covenant of peace* when the children of Israel *shall dwell securely and none make them afraid.*⁷ Deutero-Isaiah views the exodus from

¹ Is. xi.² Ps. xlv. 8, 9.³ Cf. Ezek. xiii. 10-16; Jer. vi. 14.⁴ Jer. iv. 10.⁵ Jer. xxxiii. 6.⁶ Nahum ii. 1. (Heb.)⁷ Ezek. xxxiv. 23, 28.

Babylon as the inbringing of peace. *Ye shall go out with joy and be led forth with peace.*¹ No true Israelite shall lack this blessing, *Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, saith Jehovah.*² The glory of the New Jerusalem will consist in the fact that Jehovah *will appoint peace as the governor,*³ *and righteousness as the ruler: violence shall no more be heard in the land, wasting nor destruction within her borders.*⁴ When the temple is being re-erected, Haggai, perhaps with an allusion to the name of the builder of the first house, announces the divine promise—*In this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts;*⁵ while at a still later period the pilgrims, as they go up to worship at Jerusalem, are exhorted to *pray for the peace of Jerusalem,*⁶ *may they prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness within thy palaces. For my brethren and companions' sakes let me now speak peace concerning thee.*⁷ Lastly, when the civil and ecclesiastical heads of the community shall unite to rule over the returned exiles *the counsel of peace shall be between them both.*⁸

¹ Is. lv. 12. Cf. lx. 12.

² Is. lvii. 19.

³ מַשְׁפָּט usually denotes tyrannical rule; cf. iii. 12: the expression here is an oxymoron—and we thus have a curiously complete parallel to St. Paul's phrase in Phil. iv. 7, ἡ εἰρήνη τοῦ Θεοῦ φρουρήσει τὰς καρδίας ὑμῶν.

⁴ Is. lx. 17.

⁵ Haggai ii. 9.

⁶ שָׁלוֹם יְרוּשָׁלַם, *i.e.* may Jerusalem in very truth answer to the meaning of its name.

⁷ Ps. cxxii. 6-8. The same Psalm bears witness to the ideal of Israel's unity which still prevailed: cf. verses 3 and 4.

⁸ Zech. vi. 13. For a full description of this important passage, see below.

An interesting feature of this peace is that it is conceived as capable of individual appropriation. *Great is the peace that they have which love thy law*¹ cries the Psalmist, but this is but an earnest of the yet greater peace that awaits them—*yea, abundance of peace till the moon be no more*.² This peace shall be the possession of the meek. It is *the meek who shall inherit the earth ; and shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace*.³ And this meekness consists in the humble recognition of man's dependence on God. *Peace, peace ! Thou wilt keep him in peace whose mind is stayed on thee ; because he trusteth in thee*.⁴ So this peace, whether in the individual or the nation, depends on what is after all the fundamental conception of the Old Testament—righteousness. *The work of righteousness shall be peace ; and the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever*.⁵ There is, therefore, only one class who can never share this blessing—*There is no peace for the wicked, saith my God*.⁶

The question thus arises as to how this peace is to be secured. To the prophets a very simple answer provided the solution—*The destruction of rebels and sinners together ! and they that forsake the Lord shall be consumed*.⁷ The presence of the Lord among His people in the latter days is continually represented, in terms drawn from the refiner's art, as the separation of the pure metal from the dross,⁸ but nowhere do we find the idea more forcibly

¹ Ps. cxix. 165.² Ps. lxxii. 7.³ Ps. xxxvii. 11.⁴ Isaiah xxvi. 3.⁵ Is. xxxii. 17.⁶ Is. lvii. 21.⁷ Is. i. 30.⁸ Is. i. 25 ; cf. xlviii. 10, Mal. iii. 2, 3.

expressed than in the passage in which Isaiah describes the moral effect of Jehovah's advent upon His people. *The sinners are afraid in Zion, trembling hath seized the impious. Who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? Who amongst us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?* The prophet returns "a triumphant answer to the fearful self-questionings of the ungodly."¹ *He that walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly; he that despiseth the gain of oppression, that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing evil, he shall dwell on high.*²

So shall it be in Israel, but what of the surrounding nations? The prophets, as members of an actual kingdom, naturally depicted the extension of the theocracy in terms with which experience had made them familiar. The kingdom of God would grow like other kingdoms, that is, either by the subjugation of its enemies, or by a policy of friendly alliances. Those nations, like those individuals, who persisted in opposing themselves to the Divine kingdom of righteousness should be cut off, and thus would peace be secured. This is the meaning of those national prophecies which we have already discussed. We may now take another significant illustration of this principle. The 104th Psalm celebrates with joyous devotion the beauties of God's *kingdom over all*. But towards the end, the Psalmist's tone suddenly changes. *Why do the hills tremble at the look of him? Why do the moun-*

¹ Skinner, Isaiah i. p. 250.

² Is. xxxiii. 14-16; cf. Ps. xv., xxiv.

*tains smoke if he do but touch them?*¹ The last verse gives an answer. Sin, man's sin, spoils the harmony of this fair world which God has made very good. Sin must be banished, nay, extirpated, before the Lord can *fully rejoice in his works*. The Psalmist therefore prays for the removal of the obstacle, but the terms of his prayer are specially worthy of remark. *Let the sinners be consumed out of the earth and let the wicked be no more.*² The Hebrew mind did not dwell on abstract ideas, but viewed the operation of spiritual forces in concrete instances. Therefore, just as God was from the first conceived as personal, sin also became impersonated in those who opposed the will of God. This explains the language of the prophets when they predict *the destruction of rebels and sinners together*, and the complete overthrow of all those nations whose ambitious designs or *perpetual hatred* hindered the realization of the establishment of the Divine kingdom. *Jehovah hath a controversy with the nations; he will plead with all flesh: as for the wicked, he will give them to the sword.*³ If we are tempted to apply to the prophetic conception of the peace of the Messianic era, the sarcastic comment which Tacitus puts into the mouth of the British chieftain on the "Pax Romana" of his day,⁴ we must remember that in the admittedly imperfect form of the theocracy in those days the ideal seemed difficult of attainment under any other conditions, and that this expectation of the complete annihilation or martial subjugation of the enemies of the kingdom

¹ Ps. civ. 32.² Ps. civ. 35.³ Jer. xxv. 31.⁴ "Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant." Tac. *Agricola*, 30.

was balanced by a higher and worthier conception of the causes which would lead to their eventual incorporation into the peaceful realm of the people of God.

Thus, in Psalm lxxii. as it now stands,¹ the world-wide dominion of the perfect king is not based upon his martial achievements, (though it would be idle to deny that the idea of material conquest enters into the Psalmist's description of the future) but upon the righteous character of his rule. *All nations shall do him service, for he shall deliver the needy when he crieth, the poor also, and him that hath no helper.*² A somewhat similar thought is put into the mouth of the Moabite ambassadors who sought the assistance of Judah in the sore straits to which they were reduced by the invasion of Jeroboam.³ The author of this oracle on Moab (whom Isaiah takes care to distinguish from himself⁴—possibly as Hitzig ingeniously conjectures Jonah Ben Amittai)—represents the Moabites as appealing, though with apparently insincere expressions of adulation,⁵ in the following terms: *Let the outcasts of Moab sojourn with thee (until) the extortioner is at an end—and in mercy shall the throne be established, and there shall sit upon it in faithfulness in the tabernacle of David one who judgeth and seeketh judgment, swift to do*

¹ As the verses concerning the universal rule of this ideal monarch break the connection (v. 12 plainly takes up v. 7) the possibility of there being a later insertion is not to be ignored.

² Ps. lxxii. 11, 12.

³ Is. xv., xvi. Cf. 2 K. xiv. 25.

⁴ Is. xvi. 13.

⁵ לֹא בֶן בְּרִי, "das Unaufrichtige seiner Prahlerereien," Dillm.; so Skinner—"the unreality of his pratings."

*righteousness.*¹ The Moabites, though their prayer is rejected, are, however, appealing to a sentiment which was familiar to the Israelites. An unknown prophet had already spoken of the glory of Zion, the conversion of the Gentiles to the God of Israel, and the universal peace, in language of such wonderful beauty that his words appear to have been regarded as the *locus classicus* for the prophetic enunciation of these important truths. *And it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established at the head of the mountains, and all nations shall flow into it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob, and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths, for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem, and he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.* To which is found added in Micah, *But they shall sit every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid, for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it.*²

This beautiful picture of universal peace finds a parallel in a remarkable passage of later prophecy, where at the advent of the ideal king, who marks his peaceable character and rule by *riding upon an ass and a colt, the foal of an ass, Jehovah will cut off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem,*

¹ Is. xvi. 4, 5.

² See note at end of chapter.

*and the battle bow shall be cut off, and he shall speak peace unto the nations; and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth.*¹ It is true that in this passage we find the same inconsistency as we do in its "lyrical counterpart" in the Book of Psalms.² This peaceful vision is presently succeeded by a scene of furious conflict and dreadful carnage, so inextricably were the ideas of moral triumph and material conquest bound together. But the earlier vision was not obliterated, and men yearned for the latter days when the promise to the New Jerusalem, *Great shall be the peace of thy children*,³ should attain the most ample fulfilment, and when not only the nation itself, but every member of it, yea, the whole world, should receive from Jehovah *the blessing of peace*.

The ideas of peace and universality are very intimately connected, and we have found it impossible to keep them wholly apart in our discussion. We have seen how the two views as to the manner in which peace was to be established, strove with each other for the mastery. On the one hand *the nations rage and the peoples imagine a vain thing, the kings of the earth set themselves, and the rulers take counsel together against the Lord and against his Anointed.*⁴ The result is utter destruction. They shall be broken with a rod of iron and dashed in pieces like a potter's vessel. Jehovah has set *His* king upon His holy hill of Zion, and to him He gives the promise of victory and world-wide dominion. *Ask of me, and I shall give the nations for thine inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy*

¹ Zech. ix. 9, 10.² Ps. lxxii.³ Is. liv. 13.⁴ Ps. ii.

possession. The result of this unhallowed combination is but to advance the kingdom of Jehovah to the furthest limits of the known world. This idea is emphasised in Ps. lxxii. and Zech. ix., to which reference has already been made. Both passages predict that the time shall yet be when universal homage shall be paid to Israel's king, though the recognition of His sovereignty can only be effected by an exhibition of His power. The judgments on the nations are not only judicial, but to a certain extent reformatory. They are not only intended to secure that they of *Judah should dwell securely in quiet habitations*, but that the nations themselves should *know that Jehovah is the Lord*,¹ an assertion which Ezekiel reiterates so earnestly and frequently that we can see how important a place it held in his eschatological teaching. When Israel is restored to life, and to her country, when the tabernacle of God shall be with them, *then shall the nations know that I am the Lord that sanctify Israel*.² But some of the nations refuse to acknowledge what is so obvious. The heathen powers muster for a last furious assault upon the kingdom of God. Ezekiel flings this challenge of faith to these barbarous hordes. *Be thou prepared, yea, prepare thyself, thou and all thy companies that are assembled unto thee.* The result is a foregone conclusion. *After many days thou shalt be visited.* Amid all the accompaniments of Divine indignation—pestilence and blood, hailstones, fire and brimstone—the allied hosts of wickedness are doomed to absolute destruction on the mountains of Israel. *And I will magnify myself and sanctify myself and*

¹ Ezek. xxxv. 4; cf. xxxvi. 23.

² xxxvii. 28.

*make myself known in the eyes of many nations, and they shall know that I am the Lord.*¹ The nations, in fact, will at last see the true significance of Israel's history. *And I will set my glory among the nations, and all the nations shall see the judgment that I have executed. And the nations shall know that the children of Israel went into captivity for their own iniquity, when I have brought them again from the people and gathered them out of their enemies' hands and am sanctified in them in the sight of many nations.*² All of which, being interpreted, means that the history of Israel has a world-wide significance, which mankind must lay to heart. *Be wise now therefore, O ye kings: be learned, ye that are rulers of the earth.*³ By learning the lesson they, too, may hope for the privileges of the Messianic kingdom. The tender plant which Jehovah will plant in the mountain of the house of Israel shall grow to be a goodly cedar, and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing: in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. *And all the trees of the field shall know that I, the Lord, have brought down the high tree and exalted the low tree.*⁴

We have dwelt at some length on Ezekiel's view of the destiny of the nations. We see in his writings—the writings of one who, we must remember, had most clearly grasped the doctrine of individual responsibility—a philosophical explanation of these judgments on the nations, which from our point of view are almost offensively prominent in prophetic literature. All punishment has a moral

¹ Ezek. xxxviii. 23.

³ Ps. ii.

² xxxix. 21, 23, 27,

⁴ Ezek. xvii. 22-24.

object, and is in harmony with the moral character of God. This has been finely stated by Clement of Alexandria, who defines *κόλασις* as having a three-fold object—the amendment of the sinner, the example to others that they do not offend, and the protection of the weak. It is very noticeable how clearly these three conceptions may be traced in Ezekiel's doctrine of judgment. The punishment of Judah itself is a warning to the nations, the defeat of Gog is intended to make them reconsider their ways, while, by the overthrow of her enemies, the little kingdom of Judah is protected from external danger. Clement summarizes his belief in the noble sentence :

σωτήριοι καὶ παιδευτικαὶ αἱ κολάσεις τοῦ θεοῦ εἰς
ἐπιστροφὴν ἄγουσαι,¹

and this is in the main the creed held with a great diversity of application by all the Hebrew prophets, though it was reserved for Ezekiel to formulate their teaching.

Thus Isaiah foresees what will be the effect of the destruction of the Assyrian armies. It is not a matter which concerns Judah alone. It is of universal significance. And so the prophet cries, *All ye inhabitants of the world, and dwellers on the earth, see ye when he lifteth up an ensign on the mountains: and when he bloweth a trumpet, hear ye.*² Now it is one of those curious paradoxes of history that it was the Assyrian monarchs rather than the Judæan prophets who first conceived the idea of a universal empire. But while the kings of

¹ *Stromateis*, vi. c. 6.

² Is. xviii. 3.

Assyria claimed it for themselves, to further their own ambitions and unscrupulous designs, without any reference whatever to ethical or religious ideals,¹ the prophets of Judah claimed it in the name of Jehovah of Hosts, whose purpose of righteousness, transcending all national limitations, postulated a sphere for His judicial activity which could only be co-extensive with humanity. This purpose was the destruction of the Assyrian in His land, and the treading him under foot upon His mountains, but the deliverance of Judah was only the particular case by which the reality of the two claims was to be tested. Which should it be? Which was to be the ruling power of the universe, the brute force of Assyria, or the righteousness of Jehovah? It was far more than a national issue. *This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth, and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations.*²

A universal purpose underlying history being once admitted, it was but a short step to assert the universality of the kingdom in which this purpose was to be realized. The result of the struggle, of course, could not be doubtful for a moment. *For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?*³

Under these circumstances, the overtures of the Ethiopian ambassadors are courteously declined. Not only will Jehovah Himself frustrate the Assyrian plans in the very moment of triumph, without their assistance, but the wonderful manifestation of His judgment will so impress them with a sense of His

¹ Is. x., xxxvi., xxxvii.

² Is. xiv. 26.

³ Is. xiv. 27.

almighty power that they will again leave their *land of the rustling of wings*, and journey to Jerusalem to pay their homage to the King of all the earth.¹ The words of the Psalmist offer a most instructive example of the relation between Hebrew prophecy and poetry, the latter expanding and popularizing the former. In words which breathe all the intensity of feeling which we should naturally associate with such a crisis,² the Psalmist sings of the earthly habitation of Jehovah in Zion, where He inflicted so complete and crushing a defeat on the adversaries of His people. He sees that even *the wrath of man shall turn to the praise of God, and that he will gird on him the residue of wrath*,³ as it were an ornament. He calls on Israel to pay Jehovah true vows of thankfulness, and then turns to all the nations around Him—*i.e.* around Him who dwells in Israel's midst—to *bring presents* expressive of their reverence for their Divine Overlord.

¹ Is. xviii. 7. We ought undoubtedly to insert a מ before the first עת. The omission is defended on the ground that we have a parallel to Zeph. iii. 10 and Is. lxvi. 20. But this in itself seems far-fetched, and coming before the following ומעם it is grammatically intolerable.

² Ps. lxxvi. (with Ps. lxxv.) is almost certainly to be assigned to this period. It is full of reminiscences of Isaiah: indeed, it appears itself to be one of the songs which Is. xxx. 29 says shall be sung in commemoration of the great deliverance. The LXX glosses πρὸς τὸν Ἀσσύριον. The only thing to suggest a later origin is (1) the distinct Aramaism in 6, אֶשְׁתַּלֵּל, Heb. הִשְׁתַּלֵּל, and (2) their apparently intentional position after Ps. lxxiv., which is generally taken as belonging to the Maccabean age. But these reasons are quite inconclusive.

³ The expression is very peculiar. Perhaps we should follow LXX, ἐορτάσει σοι, and read תְּהַגֵּד לְךָ = תְּהַגֵּד לְךָ for תְּהַגֵּד. The conjecture of Grätz, תְּהַגֵּד לְךָ . . . תְּהַגֵּד לְךָ is ingenious and improbable.

Here then we have the idea of that spiritual confederacy, with Zion at its head, of which the earlier prophets spoke. It is significant in this respect that the editor of Jeremiah's prophecies should have added words of consolation to the Egyptians, Moabites, Ammonites, and Elamites. In the latter days the Lord of Hosts would turn their captivity as He would the captivity of His people Israel. Suffering under a common oppression, the author would have them united by a common hope.¹ But Jeremiah undoubtedly shared the same belief. *At that time shall they call Jerusalem the throne of the Lord, and all the nations shall be gathered unto it, to the name of the Lord, neither shall they walk any more after the imagination of their evil heart.*²

But we must recur to Isaiah. In his book, as we find it now, there are two oracles of quite unusual interest. They deal with Tyre and Egypt,³ and furnish us with a most vivid and sympathetic account of those two great nations. They are both followed by a supplement predicting the conversion of those countries to the God of Israel, but critics have seen good reason to doubt the authenticity of these additions. With regard to the appendix on Tyre their reasons seem well grounded, but it may be doubted whether the passage foretelling the conversion of Egypt may not be

¹ Jer. xlv. 26, xlviii. 47, xlix. 6, 39. There seem sufficient grounds for doubting Jeremiah's authorship of these oracles, at any rate in the form in which they are at present preserved. (See Giesbrecht, *in loco*.)

² Jer. iii. 17.

³ Is. xix., xxiii.

attributed to Isaiah himself.¹ The aged prophet looks forward to the time when the Egyptians shall understand the meaning of their misfortunes. *They shall cry to the Lord because of their oppressors*, and He will answer them as He answered Israel of old. *He shall send them a saviour and a great one, and he shall deliver them. And the Lord shall be known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know the Lord in that day.* Knowledge of Jehovah will no longer be the exclusive property of Israel. *And they shall do sacrifice and oblation.* Thus Egypt, the ancient enemy of God's

¹ Is it possible that a writer after the promulgation of the Deuteronomic code could have pictured the conversion of Egypt under the image of setting up a "מִצְבֵּה" at the border thereof to Jehovah"? 18 is usually supposed to refer to Leontopolis, and generally to reflect a period when Jewish communities were already settled in Egypt, with liberty to practise all their religious ceremonies. Another significant circumstance is recorded by Josephus, who states that Onias appealed to 19 (not to 18) "in support of the legitimacy of his project. The statement is perfectly intelligible: it had never occurred to anyone to think of Leontopolis in connection with 18." So Skinner. But one may ask, why not? especially as the name seems to have been manipulated by both parties "in this connection." (Originally, in all probability 'Ir haḥereṣ = city of the sun; favourably by LXX 'Ir haẓẓedek = city of righteousness; unfavourably in majority of Heb. MSS. 'Ir haḥereṣ = city of destruction.) The most convincing answer is that 18 alone is a subsequent insertion—no doubt intended to invest the temple at Leontopolis with the sanction of prophetic inspiration. If 18 is a later insertion, there is no reason to doubt the Isaianic authorship of 19-25. Indeed, I cannot see any justification for supposing that Assyria could possibly "denote the power to whom the reversion of the ancient Assyrian Empire had fallen" (contrast Ps. lxxxvii.), nor has it yet been sufficiently demonstrated that it can be used alternatively for the Syria of later days. As to the date of the prophecy, it is likely enough that if Isaiah was the author, it was composed after the strain and stress of 701 had passed away, and left him free to meditate on the final form of the theocracy: or we may suppose that a genuine work of Isaiah's has been edited and expanded by one of his pupils.

people, becomes her fellow-citizen in the kingdom of God. But what of that other power with which Egypt contested the supremacy of the world? Is Assyria to be left out of the saving purposes of God? Would not she also learn by a bitter humiliation who it was that she had *reproached and blasphemed, even the Holy One of Israel?*¹ The prophets answered this question in the affirmative. *In that day shall there be a highway out of Egypt to Assyria, and the Assyrian shall come into Egypt, and the Egyptian into Assyria, and Egypt shall serve (Jehovah) with Assyria. In that day shall Israel be the third with Egypt and with Assyria, even a blessing in the midst of the earth: whom the Lord of hosts shall bless, saying Blessed be Egypt my people, and Assyria the work of my hands, and Israel mine inheritance.* Egypt and Assyria are here designated by titles elsewhere reserved for Israel. But in this new kingdom there is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither Egyptian nor Assyrian, neither Greek nor Scythian, but all are one in one holy fellowship of peace and love, knit together by the bonds of true religion and mutual service.

This magnificent passage would seem to be the culmination of prophetic universalism, did we not find utterances in other prophets of a no less striking character. Thus Zephaniah pictures the punishment of the nations as resulting in their conversion. They will recognize the helplessness of their idols, and they will turn to *pray to Jehovah,*² *every one from*

¹ Is. xxxvii. 23.

² Zeph. ii. 11. Many critics, *e.g.* Nowack and Wellhausen, deny this passage to Zephaniah. There can be no doubt of its entire want of

his own place. Whether Zephaniah or another thus abolishes all "privileges of race and prerogatives of place" is of comparatively little importance. There the verse remains like a star shining through the thick clouds of Divine vengeance by which it is surrounded.¹

The second Isaiah pictures the conversion of the nations in the most glowing colours. It is the direct result of their recognition of Jehovah's purpose in history. He has raised up Cyrus, *his anointed*, and given him victory for the very purpose that men may know *from the rising of the sun and from the going down thereof that there is none beside me.*² Overthrown by the armies of Cyrus *the labour of Egypt, and merchandise of Ethiopia and of the Sabeans, men of stature, shall come over to thee, and*

connection with what follows, for the succeeding verses contain an entirely different view as to the fate of the nations. On the other hand, there is great force in a remark of Eugen Hühn's: "Wir halten dafür dass dem Zephania wenn er viele vom Gerichte betroffen werden lässt, auch die Idee einer weiten Verbreitung des Heils wohl zuerkannt werden kann." *Die Mess. Weiss.*, p. 36, note. It is accepted as genuine by G. A. Smith, Orelli, Delitzsch, Davidson, Kirkpatrick.

¹ Its intense spirituality is so far in advance of the average standard of Old Testament religion that we cannot be surprised that attempts have been made to explain away its significance. But there is no reason to attach any special meaning to *מקום* as though it were equivalent to *a sacred place* (so G. A. Smith), or to suppose with others that the sentence is really a pregnant construction, which if expanded in its proper form would read, every man shall come from his place to worship the Lord at Jerusalem. It is rather intended to imply that such pilgrimages (Is. ii. 3, lxvi. 23, Zech. viii. 22, xiv. 16) are no longer necessary, though we must remember, as Orelli reminds us, that "die Anbetung an allen Orten schliesst besondere Huldigungen am Zentralen Heiligtum (e.g. iii. 10) nicht aus" (Orelli, *Die xii. kleinen Proph.*, 149).

² Is. xlv. 6.

*they shall be thine, in chains¹ shall they come over, and they shall make supplication unto thee saying, Surely God is in thee, and there is none else, no God. Verily thou art a God that hidest thyself, O God of Israel, the Saviour.*² While reserving passages dealing with Israel's mission to the Gentiles for treatment in another connection, we may here note how constantly the Gentiles are introduced as co-operating in the restoration of the theocracy.³ True, their position in the kingdom is inferior to that of Israel,⁴ but their subjection is represented as voluntary. They are attracted by the beauty of restored Zion, and her evident marks of Divine favour. Addressing his own city, the prophet cries⁵ *Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee. For behold, darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples. But upon thee shall the Lord arise, and upon thee shall his glory be seen. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising. The abundance of the sea shall be turned unto thee, the riches of the nations shall come unto thee.* This promise is then expanded in two pictures, a procession of Eastern nations offering tribute of gold and incense, and a fleet of Tyrian vessels to *bring thy sons from far, their silver and their gold with them, unto the name of the Lord thy God.* But a warning is added, it may be by a later hand ;⁶ *for the nation and kingdom that will not*

¹ "The chains" may refer to Persian rather than Israelitish victories, so that we need not rob the passage entirely of the idea of spontaneous homage.

² Is. xlv. 14-15.

³ xlix. 22, lx. as under, lxi. 6, lxvi. 12, 20.

⁴ xlix. 23, lx. 10, lxi. 5-6.

⁵ lx.

⁶ So Duhm and Cheyne.

serve thee shall perish, yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted. All this finally issues in a universal pilgrimage to Jerusalem. In the exodus from Babylon all flesh had seen *the salvation of God*.¹ In the rebuilding of Jerusalem, *the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together*.² And so in the latter days, *all flesh shall come to worship before me, saith the Lord*.³ We may conclude with the prophet's exhortation to the nations to turn to Jehovah, the only true God—a passage whose force is not to be minimized by supposing that no more is intended than a call to escape from the inevitable judgment by abandoning their idolatrous worship. It has a far more positive significance, for it bases salvation on the true knowledge of God. Thus it is rightly characterized by Dillmann as "one of the most far-reaching and definite predictions of the Old Testament."⁴ Let us now hear the prophet's words, *Look unto me and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God and none else. I have sworn by myself . . . that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear*.⁵

There can be no doubt, then, that the prophet looks for a very great extension of the kingdom in the latter days, and that he expects the voluntary submission and simultaneous conversion of the Gentiles to the God of Israel. If in his anticipations of the future "the Church of the glorification still cleaves to Zion as its earthly centre," it is rather to signify the participation of the nations in the blessings of the theocracy, than to exalt Jerusalem

¹ Is. lii. 10.

² xl. 5.

³ lxvi. 23; cf. Zech. xiv. 16.

⁴ Dillm. *Isaiah*, 407.

⁵ ~~lxv.~~ 22-23.

to a position of political supremacy. Later Judaism, however, emphasized the latter, to the detriment, if not the actual exclusion, of the former conception, but was not allowed to do so without two very remarkable and emphatic protests being raised by the prophets Jonah and Malachi against this complete reversal of the prophetic ideals. *From the rising up of the sun unto the going down of the same my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place incense is offered unto my name, and a pure offering.* Whatever may be the exact meaning of Malachi's words,¹ which are discussed in a later chapter, it is perfectly certain that he recognizes the possibility of a pure worship outside the temple and ritual of Jerusalem, and, as we shall see reason to believe, he was prepared to admit the heathen on an equal footing with the Jews in the kingdom of God.

To the preaching of Jonah we have already alluded, but the book named after him has a double value, not merely as witnessing to the conditional character of prophecy, but also to the Divine purpose of universal salvation. "Jonah is a prophet, a true representative of contemporary prophecy, a man of the type of the second Zechariah, who is steeped in the blood of the heathen, and can hardly restrain his impatience till God shall have finally annihilated the whole of the non-Jewish world."² He objected to take God's message to the heathen, and when at last forced to do so, he made no attempt to conceal his satisfaction at the approach of judgment, and was *very angry* when it was delayed by the repentance of the people to whom he was sent.

¹ Mal. i. 11.

² Cornill, *Der Isr. Proph.*, 169.

But God taught him that *his mercy is over all his works*. And the Lord said, *Thou hast had pity on the gourd for which thou hast not laboured, neither madest it grow, which came up in a night, and perished in a night; and should not I have pity on Nineveh, that great city: wherein are more than six score thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?*¹ The “*adversus omnes alios hostile odium*”² is swallowed up in the infinite abyss of Divine compassion. “It is the tragedy of the Book of Jonah, that a book which is made the means of one of the most sublime revelations of truth in the Old Testament should be known to most only for its connection with a whale.”³ It is, indeed, true that no other prophecy approximates so closely to the doctrine of the beloved disciple that God is Love, or prepares the way more effectually for the statement of the Master that *God loved the world*.⁴

The Psalmists, like the prophets, look forward to the world-wide extension of the theocracy. They represent the earth and all that dwell therein, as created,⁵ watched,⁶ ruled,⁷ instructed⁸ by Jehovah. Accordingly they call on the nations to serve Him with fear,⁹ to stand in awe of Him,¹⁰ to bring Him presents, *i.e.* to render Him fitting homage,¹¹ to worship Him,¹² to praise Him.¹³ Especially is this

¹ Jonah iv. 11.² Tacitus, *Hist.*, v. 5.³ G. A. Smith, *The xii. Prophets*, ii. 492.⁴ St. John iii. 16.⁵ Ps. xxiv. 1.⁶ Ps. xxxiii. 14.⁷ Ps. lxvi. 7.⁸ Ps. xciv. 8.⁹ Ps. ii. 11.¹⁰ Ps. xxxiii. 8.¹¹ Ps. lxxvi. 11.¹² Ps. c.¹³ Ps. cxvii., “The shortest yet one of the grandest,” Kirkpatrick.

the case in that series of coronation anthems¹ which proclaim the universal sovereignty of Jehovah. But in one Psalm² this hope is expressed in a manner so strikingly original, and yet so completely in harmony with the prophetic ideals, that it deserves more than a passing notice. The previous Psalmist had expressed his conviction that *all nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee, O Lord, and shall glorify thy name.*³ The present psalm takes up and expands this hope. Zion is described as the spiritual metropolis of the world, and all nations—even the most inveterate and irreconcilable opponents of Israel—receive, by Divine decree, the rights and privileges of free-born citizens of Zion. The Psalmist apostrophizes the city that Jehovah had Himself founded, and consecrated, and defended upon the holy mountains⁴ of Israel. *Glorious things are spoken of thee, thou city of God.* But now Jehovah Himself intervenes. *I will make mention of Rahab⁵ and Babylon⁶ among them that know me. Behold Philistia and Tyre with Ethiopia. Each one was born there* (that is, in Zion). The Psalmist enforces the Divine utterance.

¹ Ps. xcvi. -c.

² Ps. lxxxvii.

³ Ps. lxxxvi. 9.

⁴ Cf. Ps. ii. 6, xlvi. 1, and Isaiah xiv. 24-32.

⁵ An apparently recognized term for Egypt. Is. xxx. 7, Ps. lxxxix. 10. It seems to have been the name of a mythological sea monster (Job ix. 13, xxvi. 12), and thence chosen as an emblem for Egypt. Is. li. 9. Cf. Ps. lxxiv. 13, 14.

⁶ The substitution of Babel for Assyria in this passage goes far to support the genuineness of Is. xix. 24. Had it been possible to understand Babylon by "Assyria" (as is asserted by those who deny the Isaianic authorship of that passage) we should most probably have found the latter term employed in this context.

*Yea, of Zion it shall be said—Each and all was born in her, and the Most Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count when he writeth up the peoples,—Each one was born there. And, as another prophet reminds us, everyone thus registered as a citizen of Jerusalem is written for life and shall be called holy.*¹

No apology is needed for dwelling at length on such a psalm. It is both “in the spirit and style of prophecy. It is terse, abrupt, enigmatic like a prophetic oracle; in its breadth of view and fulness of Messianic hope it vies with the grandest of prophetic utterances.”² When we remember that this psalm formed a recognized part of the Temple worship, we can realize how important a part in the religious life of the nation the Psalter performed by keeping continually before the people, even in the days of their greatest spiritual degeneracy, those great and glorious hopes, which Israel first learnt from the prophets.

The establishment of righteousness in re-united Israel, resulting in the diffusion of universal peace, and uniting all nations in its world-wide embrace, naturally suggested another thought. Whatever the shortcomings of Israel, God was unchangeable in His purposes of love. Hosea had already seen this truth and given it beautiful expression. He introduces Jehovah as lamenting over the obduracy of the people who might have seen from their history how He loved them. *How shall I give thee up, Ephraim? How shall I deliver thee, Israel? For I am God and not man, the Holy One in the midst of thee.*³ But

¹ Is. iv. 3. ² Kirkpatrick's *Psalms*, p. 518. ³ Hos. xi. 8, 9.

how could God's purpose be reconciled with Israel's sin? This was a problem which Hosea left unsolved, though he was convinced that a solution would be found in the love of God. It is to Isaiah that we turn to discover how God could reconcile His purpose of love with His purpose of judgment, and we find them reconciled in his doctrines of the remnant, and of the inviolability of Zion. Thus, while destruction overtakes the sinners, *those who turn in Zion are redeemed with righteousness.*¹ Again, *when the Lord shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof, by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning, then everyone that is written for life in Jerusalem, shall be called holy.*² Though the nation as a nation may be decimated and destroyed, there yet remains a holy seed to be the stump thereof.³ He even gives a name expressive of this doctrine to his eldest son, Shear Jashub, שַׁאֲר יֵשׁוּב, a remnant shall return.⁴ When the Assyrian is laid low, *it shall come to pass that the remnant of Israel and such as are escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no more stay upon him that smote them, but shall stay upon the Lord, the Holy One of Israel, in truth. The remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob, unto the mighty God. For though thy people Israel be as the sand of the sea, (only) a remnant shall return. Extermination is decreed overflowing in righteousness.*⁵ So God's purpose would yet be fulfilled. The dross, it is true, will have been purged away, but the pure metal will reflect the image of the King.

¹ Isaiah i. 27, 28.² Is. iv. 3, 4.³ vi. 12, 13.⁴ vii. 12.⁵ x. 20-22.

And this holy, purified remnant shall not be robbed of their ancient heritage. They shall be written for life in Jerusalem. Zion shall stand for ever against the pride of Assyria and the arrogance of Egypt. Even in the days of the Syrian and Israelite confederacy Isaiah seems to have held this doctrine. But as the Assyrian crisis drew nearer, this belief seems to have seized his mind with irresistible conviction. In Zion God had *laid a tried stone of sure foundation*.¹ In Zion *should the poor of his people find refuge*.² And in the hour of extremest peril we find the prophet expressing both hopes with unabated confidence. The Assyrian is vanquished, *and the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward. For out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and they that escape out of mount Zion: the zeal of the Lord of hosts shall do this*. It is more than doubtful whether Micah shared the hopes of his great contemporary, but it is clear that Jeremiah inherited the teaching of Isaiah in this respect. In the midst of his threats of doom, yea, even while bidding the Syrians up! and fulfil their God-appointed task in the devastation of Jerusalem, he yet declares that God has a further purpose for His people. *Yet will I not make a full end, saith the Lord*.³ But at a later period, when despairing

¹ xxviii. 16.

² xiv. 32.

³ Jer. iv. 27, v. 10, 18. The words are accepted by Driver apparently without suspicion (*L.O.T.*, 252), but they are bracketed by Giesebrecht, who sees in them the insertion of a later writer whom the return from exile had filled with fresh hopes. But this is a somewhat arbitrary proceeding. To translate the words *וְכִלָּה לֹא אֶעֱשֶׂה* as referring

of this world, he turns his eyes to the days that shall yet be, he hears the Lord say, *I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them.*¹ Zephaniah, too, looks for a *poor and afflicted people* to survive the judgment *when the remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity nor speak lies.*²

Now the idea of the remnant "pointed to the imperishable elements in the new community,"³ and thus contained the idea of eternity, which was still wanting to crown the perfections of the Messianic age. But the prophets had long realized that the fulfilment of the glorious destiny of the remnant would be equivalent to a resurrection from the dead. Nor was this view peculiar to the prophets. It was shared by the people. They too had seen the deadly nature of their distress. *Ephraim saw his sickness, and Judah his wound.* But the recognition of their grievous plight did not turn them to the source from whence alone they could expect healing. It did not occur to them to repent, they trusted in political combinations. When these failed, then *they sought Jehovah* soon enough,⁴ with words which acknowledged His marvellous power, *Come, let us return to Jehovah! After two days he will*

to the destruction—*And I will make no end thereof*—ignores the idiomatic character of the expression כלה עשה, e.g. Is. x. 22. It is, however, quite conceivable that when these prophecies were originally uttered in view of the Scythian irruption the threats may have stood without qualification; but that when they were re-edited, as they appear to have been, with reference to the Babylonian invasion, the qualifying clause may have been added.

¹ Jer. xxiii. 4. ² Zeph. iii. 12, 13. ³ Ewald, *Hist. of Is.*, iv. 181.

⁴ This seems to be the meaning of the difficult passage. Hosea v. 13, vi. 4.

revive us ; in the third day he will raise us up and we shall live in his sight. The prayer was impatiently cast aside, for Jehovah could not manifest His power independently of the ethical reformation of the people who sought His aid. But the idea lived on. The Psalmists constantly appeal to God to *quicken* into life the nation now threatening to become extinct; and Ezekiel, in a chapter which has justly been regarded as one of the most wonderful passages of the Old Testament, represents the resurrection of the nation under a very striking allegory.¹ He sees a valley full of dry bones, those bones which the Psalmist also saw scattered at the mouth of Sheol,² but they are re-animated and quickened and clothed with sinews and flesh by the breath of the vivifying Spirit, *and they lived and stood upon their feet, an exceeding great army.* The meaning of the allegory is explained. *I will open your graves, O my people, and I will put my spirit in you, and ye shall live and I shall place you in your own land.*

But how little did the actual Restoration correspond to this figure! The returned exiles had continually to submit to indignities and persecutions at the hands of their heathen neighbours, and moreover how inadequately did this little handful represent the whole nation of Israel! Never was the suffering greater, or the outlook more gloomy, than during the desolating and protracted wars preceding the dissolution of the Persian Empire.³ The victories of the Macedonian armies once more gave promise of deliverance, and songs of praise resounded

¹ Ezek. xxxvii.

² Ps. cxli. 6.

³ Cf. Skinner, p. 204.

from land and sea.¹ It is to this period that we must with the greatest probability refer those songs and prophecies of redemption occurring in Isaiah xxiv.-xxvii. The author sees the fall of the oppressor, and the blissful consequences of his fall for Israel. Jehovah shall reign in person on Mount Zion and inaugurate the glorious dispensation of the latter days. The kingdom is universal. *He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations.* Lifting the vail Jehovah sees the tear-stained face beneath, and gently *the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.* But the best is yet to come. As St. Paul said, *the last enemy to be destroyed is death.* Other prophets had predicted that patriarchal longevity would be one of the distinguishing characteristics of the Messianic age. There should be *no more sickness,*² *and sorrow and sighing should flee away,*³ and human life should be greatly extended—*he that falls short of a hundred years shall be accursed.*⁴ But that was not enough. Now at length *Jehovah hath abolished death for ever.*⁵

But here a melancholy reflection obtruded itself on the prophet's notice. Were those who had perhaps deserved especially well of the nation, and had possibly laid down their lives on its behalf, to be excluded from the blessings of the re-constituted theocracy? And again, would not the Jews themselves be hopelessly outnumbered by the multitudes

¹ Is. xxiv. 14, 16.

² Is. xxxiii. 24.

³ Is. xxxv. 10, li. 11.

⁴ Is. lxv. 20; cf. Zech. viii. 4.

⁵ Is. xxv. 8, St. Paul's *νίκος* takes נָצַח in the Aramaic sense.

of Gentiles incorporated into God's universal kingdom? The thought could not be borne. But what solution could be found? And so the prophet, in the name of his nation, breathes an ardent prayer—half question, half hope—that its dead may be restored. *May thy dead live! together with my dead body may they arise!*¹ Hardly was the prayer out of his lips, when he bursts forth into the language of triumphant conviction. *God is not the God of the dead, but of the living:* and he will surely bring it to pass. And so he turns to address the buried Israelites: he bids them wake and sing, for a quickening dew of light² and life shall descend from *the Father of lights*, and *the earth shall bring forth the dead*. Ezekiel's allegory of national resuscitation has been transformed into the fact of individual resurrection.

But this crowning mercy is still reserved for faithful Israelites. For the yet further extension of the doctrine we must go to a prophet outside the prophets. In the apocalyptic book of Daniel, classed by the Jews themselves among the Kethubim or Hagiographa, the author, in view of circumstances very parallel to those which we have just considered, comes to a very similar conclusion. He is most probably dealing exclusively with the cases of those that remained faithful and those that fell away in the Maccabean persecutions. The martyrs for the faith

¹ Is. xxvi. 19.

² אורות occurs in 2 K. iv. 49 = Plants, but it seems better to regard it as the plural of אור (this writer seems particularly fond of plurals, e.g. xxiv. 15, xxvi. 10): it would seem to signify the region of light rather than lights. Cf. xxiv. 15 and Is. i. 17.

which owed its preservation and ultimate victory to their self-sacrificing constancy, should not be defrauded by death of the blessings which they themselves by their death helped to bring about. But—and here the writer takes a great step forward—the faithless Israelites should not escape the fitting punishment for their timorous apostacy. *And many of them that sleep in the dust shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt.*¹ It may be that this prediction is uttered without any reference to the Gentiles, and yet the language is so studiously general, and at the same time so remarkably parallel to the passage in St. John,² where our Lord enunciates the doctrine of a universal as well as an individual resurrection, that we must at any rate confess that others besides the Jews are not excluded from the prospect. Further, when we reflect that this doctrine was especially brought forward to account for the inadequacies and difficulties of retribution in this life—and all would admit that the idea of retribution entered very largely into the Jewish conception of the Gentile world—we are almost driven to the conclusion that it was a universal resurrection that the writer predicted would take place at the inbringing of the perfected kingdom of God. *Then they that are wise shall shine as the brightness of the firmament, and they that turn many to righteousness as the stars for ever and ever.*³

We have seen how great is the significance that we must attach to these last words. They had, indeed, been used before in the courtly phraseology

¹ Daniel xii. 2.² St. John v. 29.³ Dan. xii. 3.

of the time,¹ and this language had found a place in the Messianic expectations. Nathan had promised to David a line of kings that should *walk before Jehovah for ever*,² and when the king asked life of Jehovah, he was granted *length of days for ever and ever*.³ But the words, like other words in the Old Testament, were capable of an ever-expanding significance. The Prince of the latter days was not only *the Prince of peace*, but also *the Father of eternity*. God Himself, *the High and Holy One, inhabited eternity*, and the psalmists constantly call on all classes within Israel and all nations without, to *give thanks unto the Lord for he is good, for his mercy endureth for ever*.⁴ For Jehovah is the *Rock of ages*,⁵ and *the King of ages*,⁶ and as was God, so also should His kingdom be.

*Thy kingdom is an everlasting kingdom,
And thy dominion endureth throughout all generations.*⁷

Such then is the prophetic representation of the kingdom of God—if it is in the world, it is yet not of the world, but above the world. We have seen its chief characteristics, we have traced their origin and growth. We have seen how even from David's time these ideas were gradually emerging into prominence. And how great the ideal here presented to our view! A kingdom—based on the recognition of God's sovereignty and established in righteousness; a peace—so deep, so all-embracing

¹ 1 K. i. 31; Neh. ii. 3.

² 2 S. vii. 29.

³ Ps. xxi. 4.

⁴ E.g. Ps. cxvii., cxxxvi.

⁵ Is. xxvi. 4, 8.

⁶ Jer. x. 10.

⁷ Ps. cxlv. 13.

that *wars are made to cease in all the world*, and the nations beat their useless munitions of war into the implements of agriculture ; the people of God united to each other ; the whole world in grateful recognition of Jehovah's loving Fatherhood walking in His ways, submitting to an ideal code of ethical and social morality, and practising true religion ; a fellowship of God and man which nothing can destroy—sin and sorrow and sickness are banished, and death is swallowed up for ever.

A glorious picture indeed ! ideals that breathe the very spirit of heavenly inspiration ! And yet from what a soil did they spring ! How miserable the commencement ! How cramped and narrow the surroundings ! We see here once more the paradox of the Christian life. *Out of weakness they were made strong.*¹ And what was the power that made them strong ? *My grace* is the answer²—the free gift of God, the heavenly illumination of His Holy Spirit. How else can we account for the difference between what Israel's religion became through the guidance of the prophets, and what it might have been without their teaching ? If we are at times offended by passages that betray signs of a cramping particularism, a narrow exclusiveness, a worldly nationalism, an unspiritual legalism, these should but remind us of the greatness of what the prophets actually achieved, and of the reality of the power that enabled them to achieve what they did. *For we have this treasure in earthen vessels that the exceeding greatness of the power may be of God, and not from ourselves.*³

¹ Heb. xi. 34.

² 2 Cor. xii. 9.

³ 2 Cor. iv. 7.

But admitting that these prophecies do bear in themselves marked evidences of their Divine origin and power, is not their non-fulfilment an insuperable obstacle to regarding them as parts of a Divine plan for the gradual preparation of mankind for Christ and Christianity? The question of fulfilment is not strictly before us here. We can only speak fully on that subject when we have examined in what sense and to what degree the Church claims that the promises made by God before to the fathers have been fulfilled in her own history and in the person of her Founder. But we may remark that many of these prophecies never have been, and never will be fulfilled in the exact terms in which they found original expression. For the conditions to which they had reference have passed away, never to return. But

“The old order changeth, yielding place to new,
And God fulfils Himself in many ways.”

The temporary forms in which the prophetic thoughts found their embodiment, may be discarded, except so far as they serve a useful purpose in showing us how the kingdom of God was adapted to meet the requirements of any particular age. But their principles remain—for they are the expression of eternal realities. And of those every candid critic must confess that many have been fully, many more partially, fulfilled in the Christian Church. And many yet await fulfilment. The kingdom of God—as far as it is at present realized visibly and externally in the Holy Catholic Church—contains all those elements of union, peace,

universality and eternity on which the prophets laid such stress. But, to use an expression of Augustine's—*nondum regnat hoc regnum*. We still look for a yet fuller accomplishment of those great prophetic ideals than is even possible under the present Christian dispensation, to which they furnish so instructive an introduction, so stimulating an example. It is the time when *every created thing which is in the heaven and on the earth and under the earth and on the sea, and all things that are in them, shall ascribe unto him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb the blessing and the honour and the glory and the dominion for ever and ever*.¹

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON ISAIAH II. 1-4 AND MICAH^{iv}. 1-4.

The occurrence of this prophecy in both Micah and Isaiah with only insignificant verbal alterations constitutes a well-known literary and critical problem. Did either prophet borrow from the other? or did both borrow from some older prophecy? or are we to regard the words in both places as a late interpolation? That Micah is the borrower can hardly be maintained. On the other hand, the passage cannot be original in Isaiah. That seems to be precluded by the abrupt beginning **והיה**, and besides this, Micah has preserved the considerably better text. But that Isaiah borrowed from Micah seems equally improbable. Considerations as to the date of the ministry of the two prophets make it clear that these chapters were written before Micah began to prophesy. But, in addition, there are several indications which tell against Micah's authorship. The rhythm is fuller and grander than in his other prophecies, and the ideas certainly seem foreign to Micah's own conception. He does indeed believe that the Messianic age will be one of peace, but the peace is plainly founded on political rather than religious

¹ Rev. v. 13.

supremacy. Again, we hear no more of the conversion of the heathen in Micah, though it is plain that Isaiah did have some such expectations (Is. xviii.), while it is very strange that after the emphatic denunciations of iii. 12 we should hear nothing of the restoration of Zion, which must have preceded her supremacy among the nations. Linguistic inferences lead to no certain result. עַמִּים רַבִּים, it is true, seems to recur in Micah, but so it does also in Isaiah, while its use by Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Habakkuk, and Zechariah show that it is too common an expression to be employed as the basis of any argument as to a particular authorship. הָרַר בֵּית יְהוָה, on the other hand, is undoubtedly parallel to the הָרַר הַבַּיִת in iii. 12, but may not this have suggested the quotation of the prophecy, or have itself been suggested by the expression in iv. 1? On the other hand, such words as נִשָּׂא and תִּירָה and לָמַד can all be paralleled from other passages in Isaiah, though they do not reappear anywhere in Micah. The supposition that the passage was anonymously transferred from Micah to its present position in Isaiah is rendered incredible by the omission of Micah iv. 4.

It seems therefore wisest to regard the passage as a fragment of a lost prophecy which was incorporated into the books of Isaiah and Micah (whether by the prophets themselves or not must remain wholly uncertain). The context is in each case adapted to the passage, and the original prophecy was itself slightly modified.

There seems no valid cause for assigning the fragment to a post-exilic date. It is quite a mistake to suppose that such a prophecy would have been unintelligible to Isaiah's contemporaries, or that it lay outside the circle of the prophet's own ideas. That he looked forward to the conversion of the Gentiles is certain from xviii., and as to the glorious exaltation of Zion—if it is not actually predicted in iv., which may be due to another author, it is yet to be inferred from ii. 12, where the "Deposuit potentes" seems to demand the natural antithesis "Exaltavit humiles," and indeed from Isaiah's whole outlook on the future in which Zion would play such an important part.

In fact, such a belief in the glorious destiny of Zion must have originated before the Exile. This holds true of all pre-exilic Messianic prophecy. Such hopes during the Exile—or subsequently to the Restoration—would have been psychologically impossible had they not been handed down as a precious tradition to which the Jews clung, despite their piteous surroundings. The great conception of Israel's mission to the heathen—Is. xl.-lxvi.—was no new thing. It was inherited from the past, from the prophets of old who had declared *πολυμερῶς καὶ πολυτρόπως* the victorious truth and power of Israel's religion. The impossibility of all political independence or supremacy only served to still further spiritualize the religious aspect of this great idea.

But, after all, the religious significance of the prophecy is really independent of the time of its composition. Whoever the author may have been that gave this beautiful prophecy to Israel, he has certainly burst the limits of national particularism and has presented an imperishable ideal for the world.

NOTE ON IS. XI. 13. Cf. Page 144.

It is, however, necessary to state that a number of considerations have induced many critics to abandon the Isaianic authorship of this passage. It certainly seems to presuppose a definite historical situation which did not occur till long after Isaiah's day, and we must confess that this re-union of the Ten Tribes with Judah does not reappear in any of the unsuspected writings of Isaiah. This particular verse, however, is strongly supported by every possible *a priori* consideration, and is also in perfect harmony with the historical background of Isaiah's prophecies,¹ and certainly does not contradict any of his doctrines. Indeed, who can suppose that his ideal theocracy is confined to members of the Judean kingdom? Rather it is just those Northern provinces—Zebulun, Naphthali, the circuit of the nations—which are

¹ There seems to be an obvious reference to the passage before cited, ix. 21 (cf. also 9-12).

most benefited by the Messiah's advent.¹ Moreover, from a linguistic point of view, this section has many points of contact with genuine Isaianic passages.² We may perhaps be allowed to conjecture that we have here a genuine prophecy of Isaiah's, though expanded and amplified to suit the circumstances of a later period. We may, therefore, provisionally assert that Isaiah also gave expression to this hope of the final union of the whole people.

§ V. THE MESSIANIC KING.

THE prophets looked for a kingdom; but a kingdom was inconceivable without a king, just as "the body" would be lifeless and meaningless without "the head." "The kingdom," moreover, implied much more than the sphere of regal government. It connoted largely, if not mainly, the character and activity of the ruler. And so the conception of a kingdom would have been felt to be essentially incomplete if it had left out of account the central figure of the monarch in whom the whole state cohered, and on whom the whole government depended.

We have seen in a previous chapter how largely the prophets directed their attention to the character and policy of the reigning king. All the royal actions were measured by one standard. Did they conform to the will of God? The prophets never lost sight of the all-important distinction between an autocratic and a theocratic sovereignty. In their conception of the will of God, they possessed an ideal standard of kingly government which deter-

¹ ix. 1, 2.

² Cf. הניף יד, מסדה, דרש אל (שאריית, Dt. Is., Ez., Jer.) שאר.

mined absolutely their attitude to whatever policy the royal will inaugurated.¹ There thus grew round the throne a whole set of ideals, which the prophets sought to realize by moulding the character and influencing the policy of the kings of Judah in accordance with their own hopes and beliefs. It is especially noticeable that their frequent failures in this direction did not lead the prophets to abandon their conception of a righteous king. They were only driven back on their own first principles. They asked themselves what ground they had for their assurance of the ultimate perfection of the kingdom of God. The answer lay in their appreciation of the character of Jehovah, God of Israel. Convinced more than ever of the certainty and necessity of the victorious consummation of the Divine kingdom, they refused to surrender their ideals. Indeed the failure of the reigning monarch to realize the high possibilities of his office, had precisely the opposite effect. The very imperfections of the king suggested fresh additions of the corresponding virtues to the already existing ideals, to which they clung all the more tenaciously because there seemed to be no prospect of their immediate fulfilment. The disappointments of the present only meant the postponement, not the abandonment, of their hopes, and caused them to look forward with unshaken confidence to the certainty that God would yet raise up a man to fill the throne—often so

¹ Cf. Creighton, *The Mind of St. Peter*. "The prophets are the political critics of their own times. But what inspired their criticisms? What are they striving to discover and set before their hearers? It is just this—the Will of God."

unworthily occupied—a man who should make it his care to bring himself into complete correspondence with the ideals of the theocratic kingdom.

There were, as might be naturally expected, two occasions when such considerations became particularly prominent. The glories of the Davidic and Solomonic empire inevitably gave birth to certain lines of thought well calculated to foster high hopes. And it is to this period that we trace the first *definite* formulation of the Messianic hope in the expectation of a king sitting upon David's throne who would completely identify his royal will with the will of the true King of Israel. The second creative epoch in the history of the development of this idea was when the monarchy itself seemed threatened with extinction, when war without, and incapacity within, served only to kindle in the prophets a fresh enthusiasm for the glorification of their religion and their kingdom. For "as soon as everything great which had been attained in the community from the time of Moses to David and Solomon was seriously endangered, the inner soul rose up against the possibility of all this being destined to perish, and pressed consequently with more or less clearness for its perfection."¹

Let us now examine the first stages of this belief. David had made Jerusalem the political capital of the newly created kingdom of Israel. He also desired to make it the religious centre of the tribes over which he ruled. In pursuance of this policy of unification and consolidation, he had brought the ark—the ancient symbol of national union and

¹ Ewald, *History*, vol. iv. 203.

victory—to Jerusalem, where he determined to erect a worthy building for its reception. Indeed “we need have no hesitation in affirming that nothing short of a divine oracle could have withheld David from building a real temple. Without such a definite declaration of Jehovah’s will, it would have been culpable indifference and sacrilegious contempt for the majesty of Jehovah had David built no temple. There is therefore in point of fact no ground for calling in question as a later invention the intention of David, obviously attributed to him by the tradition, to build on Zion a temple to Jehovah, and its abandonment in obedience to a prophetic oracle.”¹ This prophecy we possess in 2 Sam. vii. 11-17. But before proceeding to draw out its most distinctive features, we must make a short textual digression. There seems an almost universal consensus of opinion among critics of different schools² that the thirteenth verse, which predicts the erection of the Temple by Solomon, must be regarded as a later intrusion. The idea of the whole passage lies in “the declaration that it is not David who will build a house for Jehovah, but Jehovah who will build a house for David;”³ and the reference to the material temple completely spoils the connection.

Now let us turn to the prophecy. It opens with a strong assertion of the simplicity of the worship that Jehovah requires. Dühm in a passage of the deepest interest points out the revolutionary character of the religious change involved in the

¹ Kittel, *Hist. of Heb.*, ii. 160.

² *E.g.* Driver, Nowack, Kittel, Wellhausen.

³ Driver, *Books of Samuel*, 212.

building of the Temple.¹ The innovation had become inevitable when the narrator compiled this history, and it is a strong argument for the historical character of this passage that we are presented with a prophetic condemnation of a design which would have been practically inconceivable in the mouth of the prophets of a later age. Nathan discouraged an undertaking which subsequent prophets would have unanimously applauded—no slight evidence of genuineness. After dwelling on Jehovah's loving kindness to David and Israel, Nathan comes to the main point of his message. *Moreover the Lord telleth thee that the Lord will make thee an house—thus exactly reversing David's plan—and when thy days are fulfilled, and thou shalt sleep with thy fathers, I will set up thy seed after thee, which shall proceed out of thy bowels, and I will establish his kingdom. I will be his father and he shall be my son: if he commit iniquity I will chasten him with the rod of men, and with the stripes of the children of men: but my mercy shall not depart from him as I took it away from Saul whom I put away before thee. And thine house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever before thee: thy throne shall be established for ever.*² The promises here are obviously far too wide to be exhausted by a reference to Solomon—and this is realized by David, who in his answer thanks God that *He has spoken of his servant's house for a great while to come—and had made him see the generations of men.*³

¹ *Theologie der Propheten*, pp. 49-55.

² 2 S. vii. 11-16.

³ וַיִּרְאֵנִי בְּתוֹר הָאָדָם הַמְעֻלָּה is really unintelligible. The text in Chron. is equally obscure. וַיִּרְאֵנִי בְּתוֹר הָאָדָם הַמְעֻלָּה for which Ewald reads וַיִּרְאֵנִי בְּתוֹר הָאָדָם הַמְעֻלָּה.

Let us now examine the main ideas of Nathan's prediction.

(1) The promise is not to be realized in David, but in his seed. That is to say, that the prophet looks forward to a line of kings standing at the head of Jehovah's people, in much the same way as Moses is represented as predicting a regular prophetic succession.

(2) *He saith not "seeds" as of many, but "seed" as of one.* We do not wish to imply, any more than St. Paul, that it would have been natural for the writer to use זרעים for זרע,¹ or that the prophet consciously referred to any particular individual. But it remains true to say that while he might have used a plural expression, e.g. בְּנֵי יִבְנֵי בְנֵיךָ, he yet employed a collective noun in the singular (cf. also the singular suffixes), which if it did not suggest, yet certainly facilitated, the transference of this conception to an individual descendant of David's line.

(3) The prophet provides for the contingency of the seed sinning. This shows that to him at any rate the seed meant no ideal person, but a kingly succession. If they sin, they will receive due punishment. But here we first meet with an idea which exercised a profound and permanent influence on all subsequent religious thought. Punishment

ד' לַיְסָדֵיךָ. In accordance with this suggestion, Wellhausen proposes reading the present passage as follows: וַתִּקְרָאֵי דוֹרֵה ד'. As illustrating the shifts to which Jewish expositors were driven: "Joseph Rabinowitsch sieht in diesem ד' ד' eine Hindeutung auf die der Menschheit geltende messianische Thora in Unterschiede von der national beschränkten sinaitischen."

¹ Gal. iii. 16; cf. Bishop Lightfoot's note, pp. 142, 143.

did not signify rejection. *My mercy shall not depart from him.*¹

(4) This assurance of fatherly correction depends on the relation the kings will occupy to Jehovah. He will be their Father: they will be His Son. The kings of Israel must ever realize this fact. It means that they have been elevated to share with their Father the burdens of empire. But as they have been given somewhat of their Father's dignity, so must they conform in all things to their Father's will. It is obvious that doctrines of immense importance were destined to flow from a due appreciation of this unique relation subsisting between them and Jehovah.

(5) The promise is not of temporary but of eternal significance. *Thy house and thy kingdom shall be made sure for ever; thy throne shall be established for ever.* The words at least imply "perpetual connection of the house of David with the kingdom of God. As long as God's kingdom endures, the house of David shall rule over it; the two are from this time inseparably bound together."² But to this unqualified statement it is necessary to add a caution. In the first place we must never forget that the kingdom of God is the kingdom of Israel; when therefore that kingdom is differently constituted

¹ We may, with the insertion of a word or two, adopt Wellhausen's view of the passage (quoted in Nowack, *H. K. Samuel*, 176. We have added the words "die Möglichkeit.") "Er kennt (die Möglichkeit) böser und guter Glieder (der davidischen Dynastie), aber trotz der jeweilig notwendige Schläge wechselt Jahve doch nicht, wie im Reiche Israel, das Objekt der Erziehung: er erzieht eben, vernichtet und verwirft nicht."

² Davidson, *O. T. Prophecy*, 348.

without thereby losing, but rather emphasizing, its essential character, it is reasonable to suppose that the "house of David" may undergo a similar transformation with the view of drawing out those spiritual conceptions without which this idea would be worthless. And secondly, we must not allow ourselves to minimize the conditional character of all prophecy. Thus Jeremiah¹ predicts the certainty of the destruction of the Temple in Zion, in terms just as unqualified as those in which Isaiah predicts its inviolability. And similarly Jeremiah seems in another passage to preclude any possibility of the restoration of the royal house of David. *Thus saith the Lord, Write ye this man childless (e.g. Jehoiakim), a man that shall not prosper in his days: for no man of his seed shall prosper, sitting upon the throne of David and ruling any more in Judah.*² The fact that he almost immediately goes on to speak of Jehovah raising up a righteous branch unto David does not do away with the significance of his previous language. If the two passages are irreconcilable, it simply shows that it was possible for one who believed in the Davidic kingship at times to break loose from the tyranny of this idea and fearlessly to assert that this too was conditional, as were all God's promises. But a second alternative compels the reflection whether after all the prophet meant to denote a lineal descendant of David when he spoke of the branch to be raised up to David. Might not the words be intended to express a religious conception? The name David suggested certain ideas, and revived theocratic recollections. Thus when Hosea

¹ vii. 1-15.² xxii. 30.

speaks of *David their king*, it is obvious that he does not mean to imply the resuscitation of the actual David. He plainly means one who will be a second David ; no hint is given as to whether the idea of descent is included in his conception of this king. David was to him the symbol of a united Israel. May not David have meant much the same to Jeremiah? In his conception of the future king, he puts most prominently forward the re-constitution of the Davidic theocracy. He is indeed heir to the theocratic hopes and aspirations which clustered round David's throne and person. But it is more than doubtful if the very vague expression *unto David* can be pressed to mean literal lineal descent.

Not less remarkable in this respect is the language which Isaiah employs to describe the origin of the future ruler of Israel.¹ His words indeed are so significant that we must quote them in their original form :

וַיֵּצֵא חֹטֶר מִגֵּזַע יֵשׁוּ
וַיִּנְצֹר מִיִּשְׂרָאֵל וּפְרָה

And there shall come forth a shoot out of the stock of Jesse, and a branch out of his roots shall bear fruit.

The word for stock (גֵּזַע) at once arrests our attention. It is derived from the root גָּדַע = "to hew down," and if it does not imply the fall of the dynasty, it at any rate suggests that it has no very bright prospect in store. We are at once reminded of Hosea's prediction that the children of Israel should abide many days without king and

¹ Is. xi. 1.

without prince¹ and that *they should cease (in) a little (while) from the anointing of kings and princes!* Had not Isaiah himself threatened the house of David, no less than the people, with severe punishment?² Under these circumstances we can understand Isaiah using a word which cannot have failed to have conveyed a warning to those who had ears to hear. He had just predicted the destruction of the Assyrians. *Behold the Lord, Jehovah of hosts, shall lop the boughs with terror, and the high ones of stature shall be hewn down:*³

וְרֵמִי הַקּוֹמָה גְּדָעִים

Is it not more than a coincidence that in predicting the rise of the ideal ruler, he should use just almost the same word of the Davidic dynasty as he had previously employed to express the irretrievable overthrow of the Assyrian potentate? Let us place the two verses side by side:

וְרֵמִי הַקּוֹמָה גְּדָעִים
וַיֵּצֵא חֵטֶר מִגֹּזַע דָּוִד

The conclusion seems irresistible that Isaiah expressly dissociated himself from the expectation of the revival of the Davidic dynasty in a yet future member of that line. But we have only considered half the phrase. Why is Jesse mentioned, not David? The reason is not far to seek. Isaiah did not expect a descendant of David so much as a second David. His qualifications were not to be found in his Davidic descent, but in his Davidic

¹ Hos. iii. 4; Hos. viii. 10; LXX.

² Is. vii. 9.

³ Is. x. 33.

character. The descendant of David who then occupied the throne—whether the weak and faithless Ahaz, or the timid and vacillating Hezekiah—failed just in that very respect where likeness to David was most essential. The prophet in despair turns away from the present royal house, and looks for a completely new scion from Jesse, who will reproduce and realize the character which made David a man after God's own heart.

Whether Isaiah intended by Immanuel to foreshadow the Messianic prince under another aspect must be considered later. Here it will be sufficient to point out that the birth of the child is portrayed with a mysterious vagueness which appears quite incompatible with a living belief in his Davidic origin. No doubt the *argumentum a silentio* is at times highly precarious. But we have not a few positive indications which point the same way. In the first place, the connection makes it perfectly plain that the sign of the child's birth will be for Ahaz and the house of David a threat of inevitable punishment. *Hear ye now, O house of David! Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign.*¹

Secondly, whoever the עֲלְמָה may be, the interpretation which makes her one of the עֲלְמֹת of Ahaz is plainly intolerable (though it was supported by the Jews, who tried to empty the passage of its Messianic import by identifying her with the mother of Hezekiah, a view which is also chronologically impossible). This exegesis "would contravene the

¹ Is. vii. 13, 14.

whole sense of the passage by leaving the fulfilment of the sign in Ahaz's hand, and at the same time making the rejected king the father of Immanuel.¹ "Not Ahaz, not some high-born son of Ahaz's house is to have the honour of rescuing his country from its peril—'a nameless maiden of lowly rank' (Delitzsch) is to be the mother of the future deliverer. Ahaz and the royal house are thus put aside: it is not until chapter ix. 7—spoken at least a year subsequently—that we are able to gather that the Deliverer is to be a descendant of David's line."²

But turning to ix. 7—the third great Messianic oracle—we are unable to gather anything of the kind. The words are *of the increase of his government, and of peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David and upon his kingdom to establish it*. Now, it might not be an unnatural inference from this passage that the Messianic prince was a descendant of David—and the commentators appear absolutely unanimous in drawing or, as it would be more accurate to say, assuming this deduction.³ But it certainly is not stated by Isaiah himself that the new king is an actual descendant of David. He simply states that a righteous king would yet sit on David's throne. This was his constant and unvarying belief, as it was also of other prophets. But that this king would be a lineal descendant of David is certainly not stated in this passage, while in others it is definitely contradicted or ignored. This passage cannot, and must not, be isolated from those other prophecies which refer to the same belief

¹ Dillmann, 72.

² Driver, *Isaiah*, p. 36.

³ See additional note at end of chapter.

or expectation. That the Prince was recognized by Isaiah as the legitimate if not lineal inheritor of David's throne and kingdom, we should not deny for one moment. All we contend is that Isaiah avoids affirming the lineal descent. It is not a necessary inference from his statements on the subject. In vii. and xxxii. he makes not the slightest allusion to Davidic origin, while the form of the prophecy in vii. is generally admitted to be so intentionally vague as to suggest, if not to demand, the supersession of the royal house in the accomplishment of the divine deliverance. In xi. the Messianic prince reappears. His birth is alluded to in terms which seem to presuppose the overthrow of the Davidic dynasty. Putting together these various indications, we conclude that Isaiah did not definitely believe in the Davidic origin of the king of the future. But there remains a final objection. How could a stranger sit on David's throne? Isaiah shall himself answer the question raised by his own prophecy. *The zeal of the Lord of hosts shall perform this.*¹

¹ In conclusion, we ought to mention that *on David's throne* is at least as patient of a symbolical interpretation as *David their king*. The latter expression, as we have seen, could not possibly have been intended to be taken in an absolutely literal sense; Hosea did not look for the resurrection of David to resume the duties of kingship over Israel. "David" meant the man who should exhibit the character and enjoy the position of David himself—the man, that is, who should sit *on David's throne* and unite the whole nation under his peaceful sovereignty. But *David's throne* may be taken with the utmost literalism and yet not postulate a Davidic descendant to occupy it. Yet if we are to seek for its spiritual significance, it will be found not in the Davidic origin of the king, but in the united and peaceful character of the kingdom, in the sense in which Hosea employed the more definite expression *David their king*.

It is customary to speak of the Davidic king as portrayed by Micah. But here, too, we are confronted with the fact that Micah expressly differentiates the Messianic king from the actual representative of David's dynasty at the time being. The king of Israel is reduced to the lowest indignities—*the judge of Israel is smitten with a rod upon his cheek!* But again, out of Bethlehem a second David will arise, to restore the first dominion of Zion. The circumstances of his birth are veiled in mysterious language, which can scarcely be independent of Isaiah's prophecy concerning Immanuel. One thing is certain. Micah lays no stress whatever on his lineal descent from David. His mother appears to be the community (cf. v. 3 with iv. 9, 10). He is conceived not as continuing David's work, but as beginning it all over again. He is not born, as a descendant of David would have been, in the capital city of Jerusalem, but, like David himself, in the obscure village of Bethlehem. He is not even called a king; he is a ruler, destined to restore the former rule. In his work, as in his birth, he will be a second David—a man of the people—raised up to rid his country from the invader with the armed resistance of the national militia, as in the days of yore. The words of the concluding part of verse 2—*whose goings forth have been of old, from everlasting*—have been held to prove that the prince is actually conceived as a reincarnation of David himself. This, however, is distinctly far-fetched: the words refer more likely to the Messianic prince, certainly not with the connotation of pre-existence in the metaphysical

sense of the term, but pointing either to the old family from which he has sprung or to the Divine fore-knowledge and fore-announcement of his coming. The point, however, to which we would call especial attention is the remarkable similarity of Micah's conception to that of Isaiah xi. In both cases all mention of Davidic descent is carefully avoided; in both cases the Messiah is conceived as making a completely new start out of the wreck of the present dynasty; in both cases he is represented as a second David rather than a descendant of David.

We feel, therefore, justified in concluding that the prophets of the Assyrian, and indeed of the whole pre-exilic, age did not regard the Davidic origin of the Messiah as of any great importance, if indeed they did not deliberately set themselves to oppose the idea.

The original promise to David was of the permanence of his *house*, that is, he was assured of a succession of kings who would be his worthy representatives. We find more than one instance in the prophets of a similar expectation. We may preface our remarks on this subject by citing a most instructive parallel from the history of Jeroboam. He was apprised by Ahijah of the fact that God had chosen him to rule over the ten tribes of Israel. And this announcement was accompanied by a promise: *And it shall be, if thou wilt hearken unto all my words that I command thee . . . as my servant David did, then I will be with thee and build thee a sure house, as I built for David, and will give Israel unto thee, and I will for this afflict the seed of David, but not for ever.*¹ The last clause is entirely

¹ 1 Kings xi. 38, 39.

wanting in the LXX—so it may be a later insertion ; or, on the other hand, the words *but not for ever* (אך לא כל הימים) may have been a subsequent addition to turn what was originally a threat into a promise. The whole passage appears to owe its present form to a Deuteronomic redactor,¹ but this, if anything, increases the remarkable nature of Ahijah's prediction. For here the house of David is to a very great extent superseded by the house of Jeroboam, which receives exactly the same promise from Ahijah as David did from Nathan. If this dates from a period subsequent to the publication of Deuteronomy, it is at least surprising that the author could bring himself to write such a sentence in the face of his own political and religious abhorrence of the northern kingdom, and despite the fact that the capture of Samaria had long falsified the prophet's anticipations. But whatever the date of the prophecy, we see here very clearly indeed (1) that the confessedly non-Davidic origin of Jeroboam was no obstacle to his receiving a large share of the Davidic promises, and ruling over the larger part of the Davidic kingdom with the express sanction of a prophet, (2) that the promise to Jeroboam, if in almost precisely the same terms as that to David, was of a plainly conditional character, (3) that the promise concerned the house rather than any individual of that house.

We meet with this idea of a plurality of kings first in Jeremiah. *I will give you shepherds after mine heart which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding.*² "Shepherd" was a well-known

¹ Cf. Burney, *Kings*, p. 170.

² Jer. iii. 15.

synonym for a king, and the expression "after mine heart" seems a conscious reference to the Davidic ideal of a ruler.¹ To return to Jeremiah, he definitely mentions *kings* in this connection more than once. *Then shall there enter into the gates of this city kings and princes sitting upon the throne of David.*² These passages are also valuable for their clear insistence on the conditional character of the promise. Again he declares *David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel,*³ and this is followed by the most emphatic enunciation of the unchangeable character of this promise: *If ye can break my covenant of day and night, then may also my covenant be broken with David my servant, that he should not have a son to reign upon his throne,* but the whole of this latter passage is of doubtful authenticity.

It is more than doubtful whether the Prince in the latter part of Ezekiel's book is to be identified with the Messiah. But it is at least noticeable that this prophet also seems to contemplate a succession of princes rather than any single individual. He feels sure that in the restored community *my princes will no more oppress my people,*⁴ and he calls upon the princes to set an example of *judgment and justice*. The Prince (שר) is actually conceived as having sons, and rules are laid down in view of the contingency of his wishing to endow them with property.⁵

¹ An anticipation of this conception occurs in Micah v. 4, 5, where the Ruler *stands to feed his flock in the name of the Lord* and is joined by *seven shepherds and eight principal men*—but there the idea is rather different.

² xvii. 25, xxii. 4. ³ xxxiii. 15. ⁴ Ezek. xlv. 8, 9. ⁵ xlvi. 16-19.

Lastly, we see in Obadiah a similar conception, where *saviours* are spoken of as coming up on Mount Zion to claim the kingdom for the Lord.¹

On the other hand it was natural, if not inevitable, that, as king succeeded king, without adequately realizing the theocratic ideal, the hopes and expectations of the prophetic party should become focussed, as it were, in the expectation of one great Personality. Isaiah's own position in this respect is indeterminate. He looked for the regeneration of the ruling classes. He expected a restoration of just judges and upright counsellors,² and so there would also be *a king reigning in righteousness and princes ruling in judgment*.³ He had probably never considered the question whether one king should have eternal dominion, or whether the dawn of the Messianic age would inaugurate a succession of kings fitted by Jehovah's spirit to undertake the duties of their high calling. It must be admitted, however, that his language in vii. (if Immanuel really refers to this king) and in ix., if not also in xi., has a distinctly individual tone.

That Micah wished to denote an individual, is almost beyond question—and the similar use of other prophets, even those who speak of a succession of kings, is corroborated by many references. Thus Jeremiah, immediately after speaking of the good shepherds whom Jehovah will raise up to feed his people, proceeds: *Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise up unto David a righteous branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely*⁴—a prophecy to which he refers at a later period:

¹ Obad. 21.² Is. i. 26.³ Is. xxxii. 1.⁴ Jer. xxiii. 5.

*Behold the days come that I will perform that good word which I have spoken concerning the house of Israel and the house of Judah,*¹ and he then goes on to quote the earlier promise. Again, in chapter xxx. he looks forward to the time when *they shall serve the Lord their God and David their king whom I will raise up unto them.* Ezekiel's parable of the cedar tree is perhaps to be interpreted of the Messianic kingdom rather than the king, though his words seem to suggest an individual reference.²

Equally definite is the announcement that the crown and diadem are reserved for him *whose right it is.*³ And again, when commissioned to denounce the shepherds that fed themselves but not the flock, he speaks of the Divine purpose to raise up David to be *shepherd over them and prince among them,*⁴ and yet again he foretells that when the nation is once more restored and re-united, *David shall be their king for ever.*⁵ And in this connection we might cite the prince of the re-organized theocracy, were it not so uncertain as to what was his precise relation to the Messiah, and did not the passage we have already cited seem to indicate that Ezekiel conceived him as being only the first of a regular succession of princes.

The reference to an individual king is found in post-exilic prophecy. The partial return of the exiles to their own land under the headship of Zerubbabel, a descendant of David, naturally led to the revival of hopes concerning the royal

¹ Jer. xxxiii. 14, 15; Jer. xxx. 9.

² Ez. xvii. 22-24; cf. Kraetschmar 160, "nicht unwahrscheinlich hat der Prophet eine bestimmte Persönlichkeit aus dem Hause David."

³ Ez. xxxi. 30-32.

⁴ Ez. xxxiv. 23, 24.

⁵ Ez. xxxvii. 24, 25.

house. Haggai thus addresses the civil head of the restored community: *In that day, saith the Lord of hosts, will I take thee, O Zerubbabel, my servant, the son of Shealtiel, and will make thee as a signet, for I have chosen thee, saith the Lord of hosts.*¹ There are more things noticeable than one in this short oracle. It will be observed that David my servant is replaced by Zerubbabel my servant, which shows how widely the expression David is to be interpreted in the former prophets. Secondly, Zerubbabel claimed, and apparently possessed descent from David—yet here Haggai does not allude to his Davidic origin—he is just simply Ben Shealtiel;² and lastly, he is not chosen *for David my servant's sake*, but it is he himself that is selected seemingly apart from all tribal or family considerations by the Lord of Hosts.

The prophecies of Zechariah are full of difficulties, whose discussion must be postponed to a later chapter: we may here remark on the indubitably personal character of his Messiah. *Behold I will bring forward my servant the Branch,*³ and later, *Behold the man whose name is the Branch.*⁴ There can really be no doubt as to whom the prophet intended by the Branch—it is Zerubbabel—whom Haggai designated for the sovereignty in the Messianic kingdom. But, again, not a word as to his Davidic origin.

Lastly, in one of the very latest passages of the Old Testament we have one more reference to the

¹ Hag. ii. 23.

² Contrast the genealogy that Zephaniah gives of himself.

³ Zech. iii. 8,

⁴ Zech. vi. 12.

king of Zion,¹ whose portrait is intensely personal, but as to whose origin not a word is said.

We have now amply established the fact that the prophets had long looked for an individual king who should in his own person bear the closest resemblance to David, both in character and achievements—in what he was, and what he did. We have seen that the Davidic origin played a very unimportant part in the delineation of this king, if indeed it can be maintained as embodying an essential part of the conception at all. Our own view is that the prophets nowhere intended more than an ideal and spiritual relationship to David, though, of course, while the Davidic house was the only royal family, it was natural to point to it as the source whence the Davidic king should derive his origin. But just at this stage we are confronted with expressions which appear intended to warn us from drawing this natural conclusion. It surely is not too much to say that the prophetic attitude to the Davidic sonship was like that of our Lord Himself, of a very negative character. It was the Davidic character rather than the Davidic sonship that the prophets laid stress on.

The character of David presented itself in more than one light to the people of Israel, but nowhere does it receive more genuinely beautiful expression than in the 101st Psalm. The poet—be he king David or another—describes the king of Israel as taking for his own example and imitation that divine *loving kindness and judgement* which lie at the root of all religion, and constitute in themselves

¹ Zech. ix. 9, 10.

so admirable a summary of the duties to God and man.

We must not, however, deny that the hope of this individual king was bound up very closely with the idea of the Davidic covenant. This appears very conspicuously in the Psalms which treat the subject. Reluctant as one is to abandon the Davidic authorship of Ps. xviii. and "the last words of David," critical reasons almost force one to disbelieve in their genuineness.¹ Without, however, going quite so far, we must confess that their date is too uncertain for us to draw from them any inferences respecting David's own view as to the covenant established with him through Nathan the prophet, but they are still serviceable witnesses for the beliefs of a later age. Such, then, are the sentiments which posterity placed in the mouth of David :

<i>The God of Israel said,</i>	<i>The Rock of Israel spake to me,</i>
<i>When one ruleth over men as</i>	<i>When one ruleth in the fear of</i>
<i>a just one,</i>	<i>God,</i>
<i>Then is it as the light of God</i>	<i>In the morning when the sun</i>
	<i>ariseth</i>
<i>Through brightness after rain,</i>	<i>The tender grass springeth out</i>
	<i>of the earth.</i>

*For is not my house so with God?
For he hath appointed for me an everlasting covenant,
Set forth in all things and secured,
For all my salvation and all my pleasure—
Will he not cause it to spring forth (יצמיד)?²*

Here then we have that idea of an everlasting covenant which is so prominent in subsequent

¹ Nowack, Driver *in loco* ; cf. W. R. Smith, *O. T. J. C.*

² 2 S. xxiii. 2-5.

literature on this episode. So Ps. xviii. concludes with an ascription of praise to God, who *showeth mercy to his anointed, to David and to his seed for evermore* (עד עולם). This view is expressed with great poetical beauty, and the most explicit emphasis, in Ps. lxxxix. 28-37 (לעלם 29, לעד 30, כימי שמים, לעלם 37, כשמש, לעלם 38) and again in Ps. cxxxii. 10 :

*The Lord hath sworn in truth unto David,
He will not turn from it.
Of the fruit of thy body
Will I set upon thy throne.
If thy children will keep my covenant
And my testimony that I shall teach them,
Their children shall also sit upon thy throne for evermore.*

This is a contrast to Ps. lxxxix., which asserts that God's purpose cannot be finally invalidated by the unfaithfulness of man. But the conditional character of the promise has been already pointed out, and we may yet cite one more instance. Thus Solomon prayed standing with outstretched hands before the altar of the Lord : *O Lord, keep with thy servant David that which thou promisedst him, saying There shall not fail thee a man in my sight to sit upon the throne of Israel ; if only thy children take heed to their way to walk before me as thou hast walked before me.*¹

The passage in Jeremiah affirming the absolute inviolability of this covenant² we have already noticed, so we can pass on to discuss the meaning of a phrase which occurs in a very interesting

¹ 1 Kings viii. 25.

² Jer. xxxix. 14-26.

connection. The Second Isaiah thus addresses the people :¹

*And I will make an everlasting covenant with you,
Even the sure mercies of David.
Behold, I have given him for a witness to the peoples,
A leader and commander to the people.
Behold thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not,
And nations that knew thee not shall run to thee.*

Now, that the sure mercies of David and the everlasting covenant refer to 2 Sam. vii. is undisputed. The difficulty is occasioned by the precise meaning of this covenant for the people whom the prophet addresses. It is generally supposed that the position granted by Jehovah to the historical David (cf. Ps. xviii. 43, *Thou hast made me a head of nations ; a people whom I have not known have served me*), and which his house failed to realize, is here transferred from the dynasty to the people. This view taken by Driver is endorsed by Riehm, who says : "*the sure mercies of David* are rather expressly assigned to the people."

This explanation has much to recommend it on the ground of simplicity, but it is doubtful if it does not evacuate the words—*the everlasting covenant, even the sure mercies of David*—of much of their meaning. These words can really signify nothing short of the eternal sovereignty of his house, and it is in this connection that we must interpret the following words.

David himself, by his conquest of foreign nations, was a witness to the power of Jehovah, and the truth of the prophecies concerning him. He was thus a witness to the peoples. What David was,

¹ Is. lv. 3-5.

Israel shall become under the ideal king of David's house, the covenant with whom stands for ever. It is true that Deutero-Isaiah elsewhere speaks of God as the true king of Israel, but when the nation is once more *a people* (עם) there is no reason to suppose that it would not again have a king. We should further observe that in Nathan's announcement of the endless dominion of the house of David, no mention is made of "witnessing" or of a "universal empire." The prophet has therefore, we may assume, expanded what he has read in 2 Sam. vii. of the historical David by the glowing promises of the position and privileges of the Messianic David.¹

We conclude, therefore, that even in this period and in this book, where not another word is breathed of any expectation of the Messiah in the narrower sense of the term, prophecy was unable to shake itself free from the expectation of a Davidic prince to rule over the house of Israel.²

Thus the king was connected with the covenant made to David, and it is only natural that after a time the connection should have been conceived as one of physical descent rather than of spiritual resemblance, especially when, after the Exile, the

¹ The Messiah is called "David" by Hosea, Jeremiah, Ezekiel.

² So substantially Skinner, Duhm, Dillmann; Stade proposes to read נחחך for נחחיו, but without any textual authority. To regard the verse as an interpolation (Stade) does not explain the origin or meaning of the phrase, and is moreover an extremely arbitrary proceeding.

Kittel in his edition of Dillmann: "Nimmt man diese Worte wie sie dastehen so kann man darin nur die Zusage eines davidischen Königtums an das neue Bundesvolk somit die ausdrückliche Bestätigung der Messias Hoffnung der älteren Profeten finden," p. 469.

royal house, so far from having been exterminated, began once more to rise to power.

But we must now turn from the king to describe his functions. There can be no doubt as to the main idea underlying all Messianic prophecies. It is the establishment of a kingdom of righteousness. And similarly the main idea of the Messiah is that of a righteous king. *Behold*, says Isaiah, *a king shall reign in righteousness*.¹ *He sits on the throne and kingdom of David to confirm it with judgement and righteousness*.² *He shall not judge after the sight of his eyes, neither reprove after the hearing of his ears, but with righteousness shall he judge the poor and reprove with equity for the meek of the earth; and he shall smite the oppressor*³ *with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the wicked, and righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins*.⁴ The Psalmist prays Jehovah to grant His judgement and His righteousness to the king, that he in his turn may give sentence to the people with righteousness and the poor with judgement.⁵ Jeremiah tells us that the righteous Branch whom the Lord will raise up unto David will reign as king and deal wisely and do judgement and righteousness.⁶ Ezekiel's Messiah does not appear till the wicked prince of Israel (רשע) opposite to צדיק has been laid utterly low.⁷ And Zechariah represents Zion rejoicing at the entrance of her king, for *he is righteous*.⁸

¹ Is. xxxii. 1. ² Is. ix. 7. ³ Reading עריץ for ארץ.

⁴ Is. xi. 3-5. ⁵ Ps. lxxii. 1-2. ⁶ Jer. xxiii. 5. ⁷ Ez. xxi. 25-27.

⁸ Zech. ix. 9. The translation of R.V. deserves notice. In Jer. xxiii. 5, *righteous branch* for צדיק, which in Zech. is translated *just*.

But the Messiah is much more than this. It is his duty to bring in the perfect consummation of the kingdom of God. His work is therefore to remove all the obstacles to the realization of the prophetic ideals concerning the kingdom over which he is called in God's providence to preside.

Of such none is represented as more urgent than the re-union of the tribes. Even Hosea speaks of *the latter days when the children of Israel and the children of Judah shall be gathered together and shall appoint unto themselves one head*¹—even David their king.² And the same seems to be the meaning of an obscure verse in Micah, where he predicts that after the birth of the ruler from Bethlehem in Judah *the remnant of his brethren shall return to the children of Israel*.³ So Jeremiah connected *the turning of the captivity of my people Israel and Judah* with the re-appearance of the Davidic king. *They shall serve the Lord their God, and David their king, whom I will raise up unto them*.⁴ Ezekiel is even more explicit. *One king shall be king to them all. They shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all. And my servant David shall be king over them, and they shall all have one shepherd*.⁵

Later in Jer. צדקה is translated *justice*, thereby successfully spoiling the obvious connection between the *righteous branch* and the *righteous work* he undertakes, and the name this work gives him, *The Lord our righteousness*. In Ps. lxxii. the revisers wisely make no distinction between צדק and צדקה, which makes it the more difficult to understand what object they had in view by drawing so infelicitous a distinction in Jeremiah.

¹ Hos. i. 11. ² Hos. iii. 5. ³ Micah v. 3. ⁴ Jer. xxx. 9.

⁵ Ezek. xxxvii. 22, 24.

Israel re-united, the next step was the establishment of peace. The actual share of Messiah in making peace in all the world is somewhat variously described. In some cases Jehovah Himself accomplishes the great deliverance. *For the yoke of his burden and the rod of his oppressor hast thou broken, as in the day of Midian. For all the armour of the armed man in the tumult, and the garments rolled in blood, shall be even for burning and for fuel of fire.*¹ Then comes the crowning joy. *Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon his shoulder.* The birth of the child takes place after the overthrow of the Assyrian. He has thus no share in the national emancipation, but he maintains zealously the peace that Jehovah has brought about. He is called the Prince of peace, and his reign is characterized as *peace without end*.

The same explanation is probably to be applied to Zechariah's picture of the meek king entering Jerusalem, riding upon an ass. The horse was recognized as a symbol of war, and not a few prophets on that account express a hope that it will be utterly cut off in the latter days. Jehovah has once more subdued the ancient enemies of Israel—and then the king comes, mounted on an ass, the recognized symbol of peaceful authority. He too applies himself not only to maintain but to extend the peace which Jehovah has created. For while Jehovah *cuts off the chariot from Ephraim and the horse from Jerusalem*—by which we are given to understand the interruption of all warlike preparation,

¹ Is. ix. 4-6.

and the reunion of the tribes in one kingdom—
Jehovah's king *speaks peace unto the nations*.¹

In the second Psalm, however, and again in the 110th, we see the active co-operation of the king with Jehovah in the subjugation of the enemies of the kingdom—and the same conception is very forcibly expressed in Psalm xviii. :

*It is God that girdeth me with strength
And maketh my way perfect.
He teacheth my hands to war,
So that mine arms do bend a bow of brass :
I have pursued mine enemies, and overtaken them.
Neither did I turn again until they were consumed.
For thou hast girded me with strength unto the battle,
Thou hast subdued under me those that rose up against me.*

In yet another connection it is the Messiah himself who undertakes the deliverance of his country
And this man shall be peace when the Assyrian shall come into the land.² But however attained, peace should mark the Messiah's reign. *In his days Judah shall be saved and Israel shall dwell safely*,³ and Jehovah will make them united under David their king *an everlasting covenant of peace*.⁴

But the king must restore the greatness of Solomon's empire—nay, rather he must extend its limits. To him Jehovah has given *the nations as his inheritance and the uttermost parts of the earth for his possession. With a rod of iron shall he rule them*,⁵ *he shall dash them to pieces like a potter's*

¹ Zech. ix. 9, 10.

² Micah v. 5.

³ Jer. xxii. 6.

⁴ Ezek. xxxvii. 26.

⁵ Heb. הָרָעָם, for which LXX ποιμανεῖς = הָרָעָם (רָעָה). So quoted Rev. ii. 27, etc.

vessel.¹ To Israel of old had the promise been given: *I will set thy border from the Red sea even to the sea of the Philistines, and from the wilderness unto the river.*² This promise shall be fulfilled in Israel's king. *His dominion shall be from sea to sea and from the river unto the ends of the earth.*³ His righteous rule shall cause *the earth to be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea.*⁴ And as David's conquest had brought him into contact with, and lordship over, people whom he had barely known,⁵ so in the time when the sure mercies of David should be re-established, would it be with the Messianic kingdom: *Behold, thou shalt call a nation that thou knowest not, and a nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee because of the Lord thy God and for the Holy One of Israel.*⁶

Lastly, the righteous character of the prince of the righteous kingdom ensured its permanent character. It contained within itself no germ of dissolution. And so the king is repeatedly represented as reigning eternally over God's people. At first the idea may have referred to the eternal succession of Davidic kings. *Let his name endure for ever: as long as the sun endureth, let his name have issue,*⁷ that is, be perpetuated for ever in the happy lot of his descendants. But other passages seem to refer directly to the king himself. The child whose birth Isaiah hails will reign *from henceforth even for ever*⁸—and similarly Ezekiel can say: *David*

¹ Ps. ii. 8, 9.

² Exodus xxiii. 31.

³ Zech. ix. 10.

⁴ Is. xi. 9.

⁵ Ps. xviii. 43.

⁶ Is. lv. 5.

⁷ Ps. lxxii. 17. It is immaterial whether we read יָנוֹן or יִכּוֹן.

⁸ Is. ix. 7.

*my servant shall be their prince for ever,*¹ while Haggai likens Zerubbabel to the signet ring on Jehovah's hand, His most precious possession, which He would never willingly abandon. If eternity in a metaphysical sense, was not actually attributed to the king of the eternal kingdom, we must remember that the horizon of the prophets was bounded by the incoming of the perfect age; beyond this, they had no further interests. When once the Messianic age had dawned, all history for them was at an end. They did not therefore speculate on the problems of eternity and everlastingness which we inevitably associate with the ideas of the kingdom. It was enough for them to labour for the removal of the obstacles which obtruded themselves most prominently upon their notice. As to the how, when, and where of the perfected kingdom—*the zeal of Jehovah of hosts will accomplish this.*

The king thus stood in the most intimate connection with the kingdom. It was his office to realize its ideals, and to hasten its consummation. But for this task he naturally needed the highest qualifications of character and ability. Now all the kings of Israel were supposed to be endowed with spiritual gifts for the fulfilment of their ministry. The outward unction consecrating them for their office was but the symbolic representation of the inward anointing of Jehovah's spirit enabling them to meet the requirements of their exalted station. Every king thus became *the anointed of Jehovah*—and the king of the latter days should be no exception to this rule. On him would the Spirit

¹ Ezek. xxxvii. 25.

rest with all the fulness of complete endowment. It is particularly noticeable that Isaiah speaks of this endowment in terms which undoubtedly prove that the gifts of the Spirit were given to the king in his official capacity. *Wisdom and understanding* represent the intellectual, *counsel and might* the practical, *knowledge and fear of Jehovah* the religious qualifications for his office. Together the three pairs of *charismata* make up the indispensable political virtues required for the head of the theocratic state.

We can learn yet more concerning the king's work and character from the names that are from time to time given him in Scripture.

Of such titles, we have already noted two. Every king was *the anointed of Jehovah*, but the title became gradually appropriated to *the king* who was pre-eminently so anointed. The fuller discussion of this phrase belongs to our chapter on the Messiah. The second title to which allusion has been made is that involved in the relation of the king to Jehovah, which found its first expression in the famous promise in 2 S. vii., which we have already quoted.

This is taken up in two Psalms.

The heathen kings have risen in insurrection against the Lord and His anointed. Jehovah laughs them to scorn, and speaks: *Yet I have set my king* (as opposed to the *earth-kings* of verse 2) *upon my holy hill of Zion*. The king now takes up the words of the Divine speaker. *I will declare the decree: The Lord hath said concerning me, Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee.*¹ Whether this

¹ Ps. ii. 7.

day refers to the day of anointing, or the day of victory, or both, is of comparatively little moment. The important thing is that the Lord's anointed of verse 2 receives in verse 7, by Divine decree, the title and privileges of Divine Sonship. We should notice how different the Biblical view of this sonship is to that of heathen writers, who also trace their kings back to divine ancestors—for it is throughout conceived as a moral, not a physical relation. The king is adopted as Jehovah's son by an act of Divine grace—and as His son he must be subservient to His will, and try as far as he is able to act worthily, as the visible representative of Jehovah upon earth.

Another Psalmist, writing apparently under very different circumstances, reminds God of His promise to *David his servant whom he had anointed with his holy oil. He shall cry unto me, 'Thou art my Father.'* I also will appoint him as my first-born, most high above the kings of the earth. The first-born (πρωτότοκος, LXX) is obviously something very different from "first-made." It does not suggest that the king is only the first of a series standing in a similar position, but that he occupies an entirely unique relation to God¹—albeit it is by grace, rather than by nature.

Thirdly (as the title Immanuel is very widely deprived of any Messianic reference), we will take for our consideration those four names with which Isaiah pays his homage to the new-born king.

¹ These remarks are necessary to enable us to understand the phrase of St. Paul, πρωτότοκος πάσης κτίσεως, Col. i. 13.

Ps. 89/5677

His name shall be called (lit. and one shall call his name)

<i>Wonderful Counsellor,</i>	<i>The Mighty God,</i>
<i>The Everlasting Father,</i>	<i>The Prince of Peace.</i>

When Isaiah speaks of the king's name, he intends to express his character. By an Oriental mind the name was always regarded as standing in the closest connection with the character of its bearer. Isaiah, when he wishes to say that Jerusalem shall once more be a righteous city,¹ says that she will be called the city of righteousness—or again, after the judgment, those that are left in Jerusalem shall be called holy.² So there can be no doubt that we are dealing here not with an honorific title (some of those accorded to Egyptian monarchs, as Cheyne reminds us, occupied six lines), but with the essential character of the king who has just been given to the nation.

First then, he is *Wonderful Counsellor*, פֶּלֶא יוֹעֵץ. The Hebrew idiom seems to mean that he is a wonder of a counsellor rather than that he counsels wonderful things.³ This king, then, was wonderful in his counsel. The Hebrews looked upon such "wonderful" ability as divine. It was God *who is wonderful in counsel* הַפֶּלִיא גִּבּוֹר.⁴ And indeed the very word "wonder" פֶּלֶא suggested something more than human. Thus the Angel of Jehovah rebuked Manoah for asking his name, and refused to tell it him, *seeing it is wonderful* הַיְהוָה פֶּלִיא.⁵ If, then, Isaiah alludes to no more than the ordinary

¹ Is. i. 26. ² Is. iv. 2. ³ Cf. פֶּרֶא אָדָם, Gen. xvi. 12. ⁴ Is. xxviii. 29.

⁵ Judg. xiii. 18. Cf. Moore's comment, פֶּלֶא "is what surpasses human power or comprehension."

duties of kingship, his words imply the superhuman endowment, and possibly the superhuman origin, of the king.

Secondly, he is called *the Mighty God*, אֵל גִּבּוֹר; but there is no justification for the definite article; "a mighty God" would be more accurate. But even so we are transposing אֵל and גִּבּוֹר. The words at most mean a divine hero, or if we follow the analogy suggested by the previous title, we should translate "a god of a hero." This would well describe the king—a wonder in peace, a god in war. Both names undoubtedly imply an extraordinary, if not absolutely superhuman ability; and that this was Isaiah's belief we learn from another passage in which the Spirit of Jehovah anoints the king with the spirit of wisdom and *understanding*, and the spirit of counsel and *might*. But that is a very different thing from attributing to the king the divine nature. It would seem, therefore, that the words themselves do not justify any interpretation which would take them as indicating that the Messiah was to be a god in a metaphysical sense.

This conclusion is borne out by several analogous instances. The wise woman of Tekoa can say that *as the angel of Jehovah is my lord the king to discern good and evil*,¹ and Zechariah speaks of a time when *the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of Jehovah before them*.² These quotations prove that David and his house might be compared to Jehovah Himself³ without anyone supposing that such a

¹ 2 S. xiv. 17, 20.

² Zech. xii. 8.

³ We have shown above that this is the meaning to be attached to the expression, *The angel of Jehovah*.

comparison was intended to express any share in the divine nature.

But an even closer parallel to the language of Isaiah is to be found in Ezek. xxxii. 21, where human heroes slain on the field of battle are styled *gods of mighty men*, אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹרִים (R.V. the strong among the mighty), which is nothing else than the plural of our present phrase. The words can mean nothing more than *fortes robustorum, fortissimi*.¹

¹ Schleussner's *LXX Lexicon*, vol. i., p. 498, to which I am also indebted for some of the following references.

At this stage the LXX comes to our aid. In the present passage they either had a corrupt text, or else were peculiarly unsuccessful in their efforts at translation. They render the first two titles as מַלְאָךְ, עֶזְרָה נְדוּלָה, a reading which curiously enough was cited by Christian controversialists for doctrinal purposes (Hil. *Trin.* iv. 23, Qui angelus Dei dictus est, idem Dominus et Deus est: est autem secundum Prophetam Filius Dei magni consilii angelus). But in Ezekiel they paraphrase the Hebrew well enough by γίγαντες. It is interesting to note the recurrence of this phrase in 3 Macc. ii. 4, where if we had to translate back into Hebrew the words σὺ τοὺς ἐμπροσθεν ἀδικῶν πολήσαντας ἐν οἷς γίγαντες ἦσαν ῥῶμη καὶ θράσει πεποιθότες, διέφθεις we should almost inevitably be reminded of Ezekiel's phrase describing the proud warriors of his day whom Jehovah had smitten down to Sheol. But further, there can be no doubt whatever that the first book of Maccabees originally existed in Hebrew. In this book we read of Judas, whose valour is described in terms which recall the warrior-like delineations of Jehovah in the second half of Isaiah—that he ἐνεδύσατο θώρακα ὡς γίγας (1 Macc. iii. 3). Now for what did this γίγας stand in the original? It is an attractive conjecture that it replaced גִּבּוֹר, אל, the same phrase that Isaiah here applies to Messiah. This would be borne out by the LXX rendering of Ezek. xxxii. 21, but we will not press the point, and we will assume that in Hebrew it ran כְּגִבּוֹר. But this is scarcely less remarkable, for it is precisely the phrase used of God in Is. xlii. 13, יְהוָה כְּגִבּוֹר יִצְחָק (though it is noteworthy that LXX here renders יְהוָה כְּגִבּוֹר by ὁ θεὸς τῶν δυνάμεων). We have thus two alternatives; either to suppose that the author of 1 Maccabees employed a phrase to describe Judas which is used by the first Isaiah to describe

The words, therefore, **אל גבור**, standing by themselves do not predicate divinity in a metaphysical sense for the Prince of the fourfold name.

But, it will be replied, the words do not stand by themselves. Only in the next chapter¹ the same words are applied directly to Jehovah himself.

This may be so, but it proves nothing. Jehovah is described as *the King* in Is. vi. 5, but no one would dream of inferring from this name as applied to Jehovah of hosts that Uzziah, who four verses previously is designated by the same title, is therefore to be considered as sharing Jehovah's nature.² Jehovah is called a judge, but all judges are not therefore divine; nay more, judges are even called gods; but this does not indicate a divine nature, but a divine office. The prophets call Jehovah *the sovereign, the Lord*, but it does not follow that when an Israelite addressed his own sovereign as "my lord" that he entertained any belief as to his divinity. Similarly, the fact that **אל גבור** is here used as a title of Jehovah would in no sense prove that the words must bear a connotation of divine essence. Ezek. xxxii. 21 is decisive against such a view—and therefore the application of the words to Jehovah in a single isolated instance cannot possibly be held to give them a meaning which is not required there, nor anywhere else, and which would

the god-like might of the Messiah, or one used by the second Isaiah to describe the majestic power of God himself.

¹ x. 21.

² Is. vi. 1, *King Uzziah died.* 5, *Mine eyes have seen the king, Jehovah of hosts.*

be plainly inconsistent with the use of the same words in another passage.

But we may be permitted to ask why the words should be applied to Jehovah at all. One cannot but suspect that the advocates of a "supernatural revelation,"¹ unable to see in the words themselves, as used in Is. ix., any distinct announcement of the Incarnation, found the confirmation they sought for their exegesis in the application of the words to Jehovah in Is. x. Words so applied, they argued, must predicate divinity, and so we have Isaiah predicting the human birth of one who is yet God. That, even so, the words have no such meaning, has been demonstrated above. But one cannot imagine any other reasons for applying the term to Jehovah in the passage where it occurs. In chapter ix. the birth of the Ruler is the culminating joy of the Messianic age. In chapter xi. we have once more the rule of Messiah portrayed in brilliant colours. Chapter x. is only one part of the prophecy. It denounces the kingdom of Assyria, which is vaunting itself against the kingdom of Jehovah. In the middle of the chapter Isaiah has occasion to speak of *that day*.² He predicts the conversion of the *remnant of Israel*. Now, it would be passing strange

¹ We do not question for a moment that Isaiah was guided by the Spirit of God to arrive at such magnificent hopes as to the person of the coming king, and to give expression to such hopes in names which so wonderfully foreshadow the work and character of our Saviour King, but we strongly dispute the use of the word "supernatural" in this connection. It brings with it a number of associated ideas entirely opposed to what we feel was the ordinary method of God's self-revelation to the hearts and consciences of the Hebrew prophets.

² x. 20.

if he made no allusion to the king with whom this deliverance and conversion are so intimately connected, and to whom he calls such extraordinarily emphatic attention both at the beginning and at the close of this group of oracles. But when he goes so far as to definitely connect this restoration with the Mighty One (אל גבור), whom he has only just identified with the prince of the latter days, is it not inconceivable that he should here be alluding to anyone other than the Messiah of ix. 6?¹

We have now examined the meaning and use of אל גבור and we come to the conclusion that as a title applied to the Messiah it cannot possibly be intended to convey the notion of any essential or metaphysical divinity. The words mean that in war as in peace he is marvellously endowed for his God-given work.

We now come to the third part of the fourfold name.

The Everlasting Father, אבי ער. To translate this as "Father of booty" makes it inconsistent with the next clause. We should, however, note that the expression is not identical with "Possessor of eternity." It means that the king will eternally care for his subjects. The idea of a king being the father of his people is not new, nor specially Hebraic. Homer speaks of more than one, with admiration, πατήρ δ' ὥς ἡπίσιος ἦεν. But this king shall not only be father to his people, but his paternal government

¹ For a precisely similar phenomenon, cf. vii. 11, viii. 8, 10, where Immanuel is named in one chapter, and in the middle of the succeeding chapter His name suggests a gleam of hope in the midst of an otherwise disheartening scene of desolation (5-8) and disappointment (11-15).

will have no end. This we are distinctly told in the next verse. *Great is his principedom and peace without end. He reigns from henceforth for ever.* It is very generally denied that these words indicate that the king is eternal in any metaphysical sense. We are reminded that equally sonorous titles were assumed by Egyptian and Babylonian monarchs: "Giver of life in perpetuity," "Ever living," "Lord of eternity and infinity";¹ that in court language the king was saluted by Israelites with the exclamation, "Let the king live for ever"; that the king could live on in his descendants; that the Messianic hope was, at least in its earliest stages, centred in an uninterrupted succession of princes. But such explanations seem hardly adequate to account for the language of this passage. The coming age was a perfect age, and it contained no element of disintegration. Isaiah's view ends with a glimpse into this ideal age, when the righteous king at length sits upon David's throne to inaugurate a reign of universal peace. Beyond and behind this he does not see. The perfect reign has begun; he hopes and believes it will never cease. He simply leaves death out of consideration altogether. It does not occur to him to contemplate the possibility of Messiah's death or of the degeneracy of his descendants. When at length the zeal of Jehovah has accomplished this, he believes that it will last *from henceforth for ever.* Very similar is the language of the Psalmist. The king's life has been preserved through the battle in which his enemies have been completely defeated. *He asked life of thee, and thou*

¹ Skinner, p. 85.

*gavest him a long life, even length of days for ever and ever.*¹

We need not therefore suppose that the king is formally invested with immortality, or that he is the possessor of the attribute of eternity. These no doubt are perfectly logical conclusions from the prophet's own words. But conclusions of this nature which seem so inevitable to us were not drawn by the earliest prophets. It was enough for them to know that the reign of perfect bliss had begun, under a worthy king whom Jehovah had Himself appointed and endowed, and to feel assured that to this kingdom of righteousness, and to the reign of this righteous king there would be no end.

With regard to the last title—*Prince of peace*, *נסיך שלום*, we have nothing to add to what we have already said when discussing the place of the Messiah in the work of universal pacification. It is more than significant that the last word of this long name should be peace, just as the Psalm describing the awful majesty of Jehovah enthroned in judgment closes with the same word. "*Gloria in excelsis* is the beginning and *pax in terris* the end."²

In this fourfold name we see the king described in exactly those terms which we should have expected from the tendencies of thought which were taking shape towards the close of David's reign, and from what we also recognized as constituting the fourfold conception of the kingdom of God. His wonderful counsel is his qualification for the internal government of the state, and of such internal reforms we have seen that none was more ardently desired

¹ Ps. xxi. 4.

² Delitzsch on Ps. xxxix.

than the re-union of all the tribes in one kingdom ; his godlike might enables him to extend the bounds of his empire, and to destroy all those who oppose themselves to his high and holy purposes ; his third name speaks of the perpetual bliss and felicity of himself and his people ; his peaceful principedom proclaims the cessation of all war and evil throughout all the world.

Jeremiah has a name of his own for the king that is to be. He shall be called *Jehovah our Righteousness*.¹ Here again it is the character of the king, and the circumstances of his reign, not his personality or nature, that suggest the title. That the use of the word Jehovah in the compound name cannot be taken as referring to the king's origin or nature, must be obvious. Zedekiah had proved himself utterly unworthy of his name. It should be taken from him and given to another.² The latter shall reign over the restored captives. The restoration is in itself a deliverance so great and marvellous, and so wondrous a manifestation of God's goodness and power, that it will put the Egyptian exodus completely in the shade. The restored Jews will set themselves to discover and effect Jehovah's purpose for them, and the restored city no less than the righteous king shall be called *Jehovah (is) our Righteousness*.³

The king is also called David.⁴ In this Jeremiah is simply following in the footsteps of Hosea.⁵ The same language is used by Ezekiel.⁶ We have

¹ Jer. xxiii. 6. ² יהוה צדקנו substituted for צדק יה (LXX Ἰωσεδεκ).

³ Jer. xxxiii. 16.

⁴ Jer. xxx. 9.

⁵ Hos. iii. 6.

⁶ Ezek. xxxvii.

seen good reason for supposing that those prophets had no expectation of any actual resurrection of the historical David, and that they attached no particular significance to the Davidic origin of the future king, but that to them David was the symbol of united Israel, and we may add, a fitting example of a ruler after God's own heart.

There are yet two more titles which are frequently used of this ideal king. The first is the designation *the Branch*, **צמח**. The origin of this name is obscure. Some have found it in "the last words of David." He is reported to have expressed his conviction that the everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure should be firmly established, *for will not he cause it to spring forth*¹ (**כִּי לֹא יִצְמַח**)? The next passage where the word occurs is in a distinctly Messianic connection, in Is. iv. 2, *In that day shall the branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious; and the fruit of the land shall be excellent and comely for them that are escaped of Israel.* Now *the fruit of the land* (**פְּרֵי הָאָרֶץ**) can have but one meaning. Thus Moses dismisses the spies whom he is sending into Canaan with the words: *Be of good courage: and bring of the fruit of the land* (**מִפְּרֵי הָאָרֶץ**). And the strict parallelism requires us to take *branch of the Lord* (**צ' י'**) as equivalent to *which the Lord causeth to grow* (**אֲשֶׁר יִצְמַח יְהוָה**), with which we may compare the description in Ps. civ. 14 of Jehovah's beneficent operations, *He causeth grass to grow for the cattle* (**מִצְמִיחַ חֲצִיר לְבַהֲמָה**). It has been suggested that we should take the words as signifying the restored

¹ 2 S. xxiii. 5.

community, planted by Jehovah. Reference is made to such passages as Is. v. 7 and lxi. 3, but on referring to those passages we find that a different word is employed to express this conception, and that, had it been intended here, we should have had 'נטע י' or 'מיטע י' (= plant, planting of Jehovah). Besides, it is obviously impossible if *fruit of the earth* (פרי הארץ) refers to the actual fruits of the earth. The same would also be a fatal objection to understanding the title as having reference to the Messiah, but it is parried by the assertion that it is from this passage that Zechariah derives his own use of the term to designate the future king.¹ Zechariah, however, most probably borrowed from Jeremiah;² and the latter shows that if we are to supply anything to make up the sense of Branch (צמח) it should be *unto David* (לדוד), not *of David* (דוד); and this use was made possible, if not actually suggested by Is. xi. 1, where the king is called *a shoot* (חטר) and *a branch* (נצר). Besides, it is utterly incredible that Isaiah, if he had intended to speak of the Messiah here, would have dismissed the whole subject with a single reference of dubious meaning. But it is useless to go on refuting what is refuted by itself. There is only one possible loophole of escape for those who persist in upholding the directly Messianic reference. There are those who, realizing the inexorable law of parallelism, are prepared to take *fruit of the earth* (פרי הארץ) as being also a name for the Messiah, and to "account for this double designation of the coming one merely on the ground of the endeavour to describe the twofold aspect of

¹ Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12.

² Jeremiah xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15.

His origin,"¹ earthly and heavenly. We may leave this interpretation to find its own adherents. There can, however, be no doubt that the word is used in Jeremiah, and that there it would be possible to supply *David*, especially as *unto David* stands in the text. But we must remember that the prophets sometimes abstained from drawing conclusions which seem obvious to us, and that Zechariah, when quoting this prophecy, and applying it, as we shall see is most probably the case, to an actual descendant of David in the person of Zerubbabel, yet omits all mention of David, and speaks of *my servant the Branch*, and the *Man the Branch*, quite absolutely. We conclude, therefore, that the idea of Davidic origin was not an essential constituent of its meaning; the expression more probably signified a new start, a fresh life under Jehovah's fostering care.²

The other title that is applied to the king is that of shepherd. The Israelites came of a pastoral stock. *The men are shepherds* were the words in which Joseph proposed to introduce his brethren to Pharaoh,³ *for they have been keepers of cattle and they have brought their flocks and their herds and all that they have*. Moses himself had tended sheep, and both psalmist⁴ and prophet⁵ speak of him in terms drawn from his former occupation. David also had been a shepherd lad, and God had *taken him from following the ewes with their young ones to be shepherd of Jacob his people*.⁶ And so the second

¹ Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, vol. i. p. 146.

² This receives some support from Ezekiel's allegory of the cedar and the tender plant.

³ Gen. xlv. 33. ⁴ Ps. lxxvii. 20. ⁵ Is. lxiii. 11. ⁶ Ps. lxxviii. 71.

David assisted by *seven shepherds* shall *stand and feed Israel in the strength of the Lord*.¹ The title is applied to Cyrus,² as is also the even higher name *my anointed*,³ because as the destroyer of heathen polytheism, and the deliverer of the Jews, he was worthy to be reckoned as one of the theocratic kings. We next meet the phrase in Jeremiah. He is describing the happy days when Israel and Judah shall be re-united, and *I will bring you to Zion, and I will give you shepherds after mine heart* (another allusion to David, the man after God's own heart), *which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding*.⁴ In a later chapter he develops this image, but the use of the plural shows that he has no specially pre-eminent shepherd in his mind. To the wicked pastors that feed his people, God turns and speaks: *Woe to the shepherds that destroy and scatter the sheep of my pasture: I will visit upon you the evil of your doings, and I will gather the remnant of my flock out of all countries whither I have driven them and will bring them again to their folds, and I will set up shepherds over them which shall feed them, and they shall fear no more nor be dismayed*.⁵ Ezekiel dwells on the same subject at much greater length. He denounces *the wicked shepherds who feed themselves and not the flock*.⁶ They shall be judged according to their deeds, and God Himself will be the Shepherd of the flock. In language of exquisite tenderness the prophet speaks of Jehovah's loving care for the sheep. *Behold I myself, even I, will search for my sheep and seek them out; as a shepherd*

¹ Micah v. 4, 5.² Is. xlv. 28.³ Is. xlv. 1⁴ Jer. iii. 15.⁵ Jer. xxiii. 1-4.⁶ Ezek. xxxiv. 2.

*seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among them that are scattered abroad, so will I seek out my sheep ; and I will deliver them out of all places whither they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. I myself will feed my flock, I will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God. I will seek that which is lost, and will bring again that which was driven away, and will bind up that which was broken, and will strengthen that which was sick.*¹ God Himself is the shepherd. The next verse comes as a shock. *And I will set up one shepherd over them, even my servant David, and he shall feed them ; he shall feed them, and he shall be their shepherd. And yet they are my sheep, the sheep of my pasture, saith the Lord God.*² In a later chapter Ezekiel recurs to this conception. He has been emphasizing in word and symbol the restoration of Israel's unity, and then proceeds : *And my servant David shall be king over them and they all shall have one shepherd.*³ This verse shows conclusively that by this time the ideal shepherd and the ideal king were conceived as being identical.

An entirely new turn to this idea is given by "Zechariah." The people are in a state of misery, they go their way like sheep, they are *afflicted because there is no shepherd.*⁴ A new oracle now commences, and the scene changes correspondingly. The nation is the flock, but it is a *flock of slaughter*, for it is owned by possessors—foreign potentates—who slay them and hold themselves not guilty, while their own shepherds—the Jewish rulers appointed or approved by these foreign powers—pity them not.⁵

¹ Ezek. xxxiv. 11, 12, 15, 16.

² *Ibid.* 31.

³ Ezek. xxxvii. 24.

⁴ "Zech." x. 2.

⁵ xi. 5.

The prophet is then bidden by Jehovah to take their place. *Thus said the Lord my God: Feed the flock of slaughter.*¹ *So I fed the flock of slaughter for the merchants of the sheep.*² He takes two staves to assist him in his work, to which he attaches symbolical names: *Beauty* or *Graciousness* typifies the principles of his government, and *Bands* the union he hopes to effect between Israel and Judah. He began by taking energetic measures. In one month, *i.e.* in an incredibly short space of time, he cut off three shepherds. The historical references are altogether too vague and scanty to admit of verification, but Wellhausen has made out a very good case for referring this incident to the troublous times "of the last decennium before the outbreak of the Maccabean revolt, when frequent changes in the high priesthood were forcibly effected."³ However that may be, his rule became extremely unpopular to the infatuated people, and with an exclamation of despair he abandoned them to their fate. He broke his staff, *Grace*, to annul the covenant which he had made with all peoples. He then formally announced his abdication to the merchants of the flock.⁴ They

¹ xi. 4.

² The Heb. לֶכֶן עָנִי הַצֹּאֵן is really unintelligible, and the recurrence of the whole phrase, including לֶכֶן in II, shows that we must look for a textual corruption in these words. LXX has ἐλς τὴν χανανίτην = לִכְנֵעִי הַצֹּאֵן. This is undoubtedly right.

³ Nowack, *Hand-Kommentar, die kleine Propheten*, 383-4.

⁴ The reference here is very obscure. עָמִים can hardly mean the tribes of Israel. It *may* refer to the compact he had made with the owners of the flock, or may we conceivably see a reference to the covenant of peace which the Messianic King inaugurated in ix. 10?

treated him with contempt and assessed the value of his services at thirty shekels, the compensation due to an injured slave.¹ But in rejecting the good shepherd, they had rejected Jehovah Himself, and so He now intervenes. He bids the shepherd take the money, the splendid recognition of his divinely imposed labours,² and by way of driving home the lesson that it was Jehovah Himself whom they had insulted by this paltry sum, commands him to cast it into the temple treasury.³ The prophet was commissioned once more by Jehovah to appear in a very different character. *Take unto thee yet again the instruments of a foolish shepherd*, for Jehovah would reward their ingratitude by delivering them into the hand of a wicked and selfish ruler who should himself be punished as he deserved.

But what of the good shepherd? We read of him again in xiii. 7-9, which is now almost universally admitted to be divorced from its proper context. There can indeed be little doubt that it should follow after xi. 17 (or even after xi. 14 according to some critics). The people are punished by the removal of their ruler. The guilty bring about the death of the innocent, and in his death they are

¹ Ex. xxi. 32.

² We should probably read יְקָרְתִּי for יְקָרְתִּי.

³ There can be but little doubt that we should read תְּרָאִצֵּר. Every attempt to explain תְּרָאִצֵּר is distinctly far-fetched. On the other hand, תְּרָא makes admirable sense, and is in harmony with the entire context. Even LXX saw the inadequacy of תְּרָא, and paraphrased *eis τὸ χωνευτήριον* (= אֶל-הַיִּצָּק). Targ. Jon. retains the ת in אֶל-תְּרָאִצֵּר = the master of the treasury. It is interesting to note that this passage was applied Messianically by the Rabbis, who fancifully interpreted the thirty pieces of silver as the 30 precepts which Messiah should give to Israel.

themselves punished. Jehovah calls on the sword to awake and *smite the shepherd*, His shepherd, even *the man that is His fellow*.¹ This is their crime, the murder of the good shepherd, and this is the result of their crime: *the sheep shall be scattered*, and even the little ones will feel the consequences of their wicked act. Two-thirds of the nation will be clean cut off. The remaining third brought through fire will acknowledge Jehovah as their Lord. The great crime, however, still remains unrepented. But Jehovah *will pour on the house of David and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication, and they shall look unto me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for an only son*.² The words are startlingly bold. Taken as they stand, they must mean that Jehovah Himself was wounded in the person of the shepherd that was His fellow.³ The words recall the passage where the suffering servant of Jehovah is spoken of (cf. esp. מִהֶלֶל in Is. liii. 5

¹ גִּבּוֹר עֲמִיתִי, the words do not perhaps mean more than complete identity of will and purpose (cf. יִקְרֵהוּ, if that be the correct reading, and compare Jeremiah, בִּלְבִי, and the very close connection between the Shepherd and Jehovah in Ezek. xxxiv.). Nowack suggests that he may have been a high priest.

² xii. 10. The connection with the preceding verses has been disputed, but no one will deny that the prophet here represents the nation plunged in mourning for some one unjustly put to death. This can hardly be anyone else than the good shepherd whose life and death have been so dramatically described in xi. and xiii. 7-9.

³ אֵלֵי has been altered to אֵלָי or אֵלָיו or some words are supposed to have dropped out. The Lucianic texts of the LXX, which read εἰς ὅν, are probably derived from John xix. Hitzig suggests that the object of their hate is left purposely vague, "da der מִדְּקָרִים von israelitischer Hand viele waren."

and כֹּהֵן יְדִי in Ps. xxii. 17 (16)). It seems most probable that Zechariah here definitely connects the good shepherd with the servant of the Lord.

Now we must notice how the description of the Messianic king prepares the way for this prediction of τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας.¹ He is meek—the word usually denotes affliction endured or survived. The king too is the passive recipient of Jehovah's favours. Jehovah Himself is *a just God and a Saviour* (אֵל צַדִּיק וּמִשְׁיֵי), Zion's king is *just and saved* (צַדִּיק וְנוֹשָׁע). He too seems to be brought in connection with the *poor of the earth* (עַנְיֵי הָאָרֶץ).

The lesson of the good shepherd is obvious. Man can by his self-will effectually hinder the Divine purpose and frustrate the Divine goodness. The Jews were to give a yet more terrible illustration of the truth of this allegory before their national history closed in fire and gloom.

There is yet one more passage which demands consideration. As it stands entirely by itself we have refrained from citing it in illustration of any of our conclusions. A full discussion of this passage—Ps. xlv. 6 (*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever*)—will be found at the end of the chapter, where the reader may see for himself the grounds for our conclusion that the Divine Name is nowhere directly applied to Jehovah's earthly representative.²

So far, we have considered the human king sitting on David's throne. But running parallel with this hope there is throughout the whole of the Old Testament another conception equally strong, and even

¹ 1 Pet., i. 11.

² See additional note at end of the chapter.

more magnificent. It is the belief that Jehovah Himself would come to Zion to reign in her midst.

Thus Isaiah (if xxxiii. be from his hand; Ewald assigns it "unquestionably" to one of his disciples) predicts the deliverance of Judah from her sore straits. Addressing the righteous in Zion, he tells them: *Thine eyes shall see a king in his beauty, they shall behold a land of far distances, i.e. "the spacious and ever-extending dominions of the Messiah."*¹ But it is more than doubtful if the Messiah can be intended. For in the first place the absence of the article before מֶלֶךְ shows that it is the kingdom rather than the king that is spoken of, while if the king is anyone in particular, it must be Jehovah,² for in verse 22 we read, *Jehovah is our judge; Jehovah is our lawgiver, Jehovah is our king. He will save us.*

Zephaniah also pictures the day of the Lord as a sacrificial feast prepared by Jehovah in Zion, to which He has called and sanctified His guests. The evil are punished, whether they be high or low, and Jehovah searches Jerusalem with candles to discover any that are hiding from His presence.³ The last verses of this chapter are probably not from Zephaniah's hand, but they contain the same idea of the presence of God among His people. *Sing, O daughter of Zion: shout, O Israel. The Lord hath taken away thy judgements, he hath cast out thine enemy: the king of Israel, even the Lord, is in the midst of thee, thou shalt not see evil any more.*⁴

¹ Skinner, *C. B. S.*, 251, on Is. xxxiii. 17.

² Dillmann says, p. 297: "Auch an Jahve ist bei מֶלֶךְ nicht zu denken trotz 22," but he does not say why not.

³ Zeph. i. 7-14.

⁴ Zeph. iii. 14, 15, and 17.

Ezekiel's last word, after describing the perpetual bliss of the re-constituted theocracy, suggests the same thought. *The name of the city from that day shall be, The Lord is there.*¹ The prophet had witnessed the departure of Jehovah from Jerusalem when He had withdrawn *His glory* from the temple;² the people purified and restored, He returns to dwell in their midst.

We have already noticed how Ezekiel represents Jehovah Himself as tending the sheep; the work of Jehovah and His servant David are indeed so similar in this respect as to be practically indistinguishable. In like manner Ps. lxxx. appeals to God as the *shepherd of Israel*, and the image is beautifully expanded in Is. xl. Jehovah Himself leads His people back to Zion, and the prophet bids Zion lift up her voice and tell the good tidings to the cities of Judah, *Behold your God. Behold the Lord God will come as a strong one, his arm ruling for him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom; he shall gently lead those that give suck.*³ This shepherd, as the prophet reminds us, is *the king of Jacob.*⁴

But it is perhaps in the Psalms that this image is most frequent. The entrance of the ark into Jerusalem symbolized the entrance of *the King of glory* into *the everlasting doors* of the impregnable city.⁵ *The Lord and the ark of his strength* arose to occupy *the resting place* prepared for Him in

¹ Ezek. xlviii. 35.

² Ezek. x.

³ Is. xl. 9-11.

⁴ Is. xli. 21, xliii. 15, xliv. 6.

⁵ Ps. xxiv. 7-10.

Zion.¹ The poet blesses *the Lord out of Zion which dwelleth at Jerusalem.*² Even more significant are the coronation anthems, Pss. xciii., xcv.—c. The prophet to whom reference has just been made, in his certain anticipation of deliverance from Babylon, had cried aloud in ecstasy: *How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that saith unto Zion—Thy God reigneth;* or, to adopt a more accurate translation: *Thy God hath become, or proclaimed himself king,*³ and now these Psalms joyfully commemorate the great event. They tell of Jehovah's advent, of His glory and strength and righteousness, of Israel's gratitude and loving service. But His kingdom is universal, and so the Psalmist bids men *tell it out among the nations that Jehovah hath proclaimed himself King.* It is a message not only for Zion, but for all the world, *for he cometh, for he cometh to judge the earth. He shall judge the world with righteousness and the people with his truth.*⁴

Another well-known instance of this ascription of the work of salvation to Jehovah Himself is found in Is. lxiii. "A solitary and majestic figure, in blood-red vesture, is seen approaching from the direction of Edom."⁵ The prophet ventures to address the

¹ Ps. lxxxii. 8.

² Ps. cxxxv. 21.

³ Is. lii. 7.

⁴ Ps. xcvi. 10. It is not necessary to do more than refer to the very curious gloss which is found neither in Heb., LXX, English Versions, or present Vulg.: *Dominus regnavit a ligno.* The words are an early Christian gloss on the Psalms, they occur in the "Italic" versions, Just. Mart., and possibly Ep. Barn. For their liturgical use see Julian, *Dict. of Hymnology*, p. 1220.

⁵ Skinner, p. 195.

stranger, who announces that He is none other than Jehovah Himself, who had trodden the wine-press alone. *And I looked, and there was none to help, and I wondered that there was none to uphold. Therefore mine own arm brought salvation unto me: and my fury, it upheld me. And I trod down the people in mine anger, and made them drunk with my fury, and I poured out their life-blood on the earth.*¹

But perhaps the most striking passage in this connection is to be found in the late prophecies preserved in Is. xxiv.—xxvii. When a tremendous judgment has shattered all principalities and powers in heaven and earth, Jehovah of hosts proclaims Himself king in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and *before his elders shall be glory.* The kingdom is inaugurated with a mystic communion feast. *And on this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And he will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering spread over all the peoples, and the vail that is spread over all the nations. He hath swallowed up death for ever, and the Lord God will wipe away tears from off all faces.*

This magnificent prophecy describes, with unsurpassed brilliancy, the blessed consequences of Jehovah's personal rule in Zion. We note the universality of salvation, the hope of immortality, the supreme happiness of His people, the intimate communion between God and man. But this glorious consummation makes no mention of

¹ Is. lxiii. 1-6.

Messiah or Messianic king or priests or princes. *Elders* alone are mentioned; the words must not be pressed; it is not even necessary to feel that their introduction is "in correspondence with the historical circumstances of the postexilic community." (Dillmann); their mention is accounted for by the intentional resemblance to the theophany of Ex. xxiv. 9, 10, but the noticeable thing is that when "elders" are mentioned, there is not any Messianic figure to correspond to Moses.

Here then were these two ideas, the advent of Jehovah and the reign of the Messianic king, unreconciled yet not irreconcilable, for the event proved that they might yet be reconciled. But even in the Old Testament we see some progress made towards their reconciliation. Thus Malachi predicts the coming of the Lord Himself. *Behold I send my messenger and he shall prepare the way before me, and the Lord whom ye seek shall suddenly come to his temple, and the angel of the covenant in whom ye delight, behold he cometh, saith the Lord of hosts.*¹

So Jehovah when He does come will come as the angel of the covenant.² Now, turning to Zech. xii. 10, we find that *in that day the house of David shall be as God, as the angel of the Lord before them.* Here then we can discern the elements of that solution which was subsequently effected by uniting the two conceptions in one Person.

We can now summarize the teaching of the Hebrew prophets with regard to the expectation of a king that was yet to come.

¹ Mal. iii. 1.

² For the meaning of this phrase, see above, p. 72.

I. First, we notice the belief that Jehovah Himself would come and inaugurate His kingdom in Mount Zion. The Israelites never lost sight of the fact that He was their true king, and that finally *the kingdom should be Jehovah's*. This is a fact of infinite importance, as it will explain to us much of the Apostolic language concerning Christ, and why they thought it legitimate to apply to Him passages in the O.T. addressed to Jehovah.

II. Secondly, with regard to the kingship itself:

(i.) The king was the visible representative of the invisible Divine King. He sat on Jehovah's throne, he ruled over Jehovah's people, he reigned by Jehovah's will. It was his task to carry out that will in the government of the state. The ideal king did this so perfectly that his kingdom was generally recognized as being identical with Jehovah's (cf. *e.g.* Ps. ci., and Jer. xxiii. and xxxiii.).

(ii.) The king was in another sense the representative of the people before God. He was their *shield and defender*:¹ in his woes all the nation was afflicted, in his joy they too rejoiced (cf. Ps. lxxxix.).

(iii.) In virtue of his high and sacred office he is by divine decree appointed "Son of God," while Jehovah will be his Father, taking him under His paternal care, correcting him, but never entirely forsaking him (cf. 2 S. vii.). He is thus Son of God (Ps. ii., lxxxix.), though we have seen reason for doubting that he was himself ever actually designated by the Divine Name (Is. ix., Ps. xlv.).

¹ Ps. lxxxiv. 9.

(iv.) At first, and even to a very much later date, "the king" was conceived as implying an uninterrupted succession of kings, but the attention of the prophets gradually became fixed on one who would pre-eminently fulfil all the duties of his kingly office (cf. Is., Hag., Jer., Ezek., Zech.).

(v.) But to do this adequately, he would need, as he would also receive, the fullest endowment of Jehovah's spirit to fit him for his God-given task (cf. Is. xi.).

(vi.) This task, broadly speaking, was the establishment of absolute righteousness, even the righteousness characteristic of Jehovah (Is. xxxii., xi., Jer. xxiii., Zech. ix., Ps. lxxii.).

(vii.) He should sit on David's throne, and, inheriting David's character, should also receive the blessings of the Davidic covenant. His Davidic origin is nowhere expressly asserted, except perhaps in Zech. xii.; it is, however, implied in Jeremiah's *Branch unto David* (צֶמֶחַ לְדָוִד), though in Isaiah and Jeremiah some expressions tell decidedly against it (cf. Is. xi., Jer. xxii.); in other prophets it is completely ignored. He is, however, called David, as ruling over a united Israel, and as being a man after God's heart.

(viii.) It is his duty to destroy the enemies of his people and inaugurate a reign of lasting peace (cf. esp. Is. ix., xi., Mic. v., Zech. ix.).

(ix.) His dominion is to be universal (Zech. ix., Ps. ii., xviii., lxxii., lxxxix., Is. lv.).

(x.) And to this kingdom there shall be no end (Is. ix., Hag. ii., Is. lv., Ezek. xxxvii., Ps. xxi.).

III. Thirdly, by the representation of the king as Shepherd, some further considerations of a most important nature are suggested :

(i.) The re-union of the tribes of Israel. Wherever this title is used of the Messianic king there is always a reference to his work of reuniting the sundered tribes of Israel (Mic. v., Jer. iii., xxiii., xxxiii., Ezek. xxxiv., xxxvii., Zech. xi.; cf. also Ps. lxxvii., where Jehovah, Shepherd of Israel, is invoked at the opening of a prayer for the restoration of all Israel).

(ii.) The restoration of the whole nation from captivity and exile (cf. esp. the connection in Ezek. xxxvi.—xxxvii.).

(iii.) The identity of function between the Shepherd and Jehovah (cf. esp. Ezek. xxxiv. and Zech. xiii. 7: *man that is my fellow*, and God's intervention in xi. 13; also יְהוָה, if that be the right reading in xii. 10).

(iv.) The Shepherd's care and trouble over the lost sheep; this inevitably suggests the idea of pain and suffering. We can almost hear the beat of the shepherd's sympathetic heart in the beautiful words that Ezekiel puts into Jehovah's mouth, xxxiv. 11-16.

(v.) We are thus almost prepared for the broken heart of the good shepherd when he realized the hopeless character of his task, and for his violent death at the hands of the people whom he had sought to tend (Zech. xi. and xiii. 7-11).

(vi.) Lastly, we must observe the repentance of the people, Zech. xii. 10, and its most happy results.

IV. Fourthly, we would call attention to the gradual drawing together of different conceptions, by the introduction of the Angel of Jehovah (מִכָּאֵל יְהוָה), who, if identical with Jehovah Himself, is yet in a sense to be distinguished from Him, and may be legitimately compared to the house of David.

V. Finally, we notice the following definite predictions :

- (1) The King is to be born at Bethlehem.
- (2) He is connected with David by spiritual, if not physical descent.
- (3) He is declared to be the Son of God by divine decree.
- (4) He is honoured by kingly representatives of distant nations.
- (5) On Him the Spirit rests with fullest power.
- (6) He shall be a true Shepherd to His people (cf. St. Jn. x.).
- (7) He shall give peace to His people (cf. St. Jn. xvii.).
- (8) He shall suddenly come to His temple, as the messenger of the Covenant.
- (9) He shall enter Jerusalem riding on an ass.
- (10) He shall be rejected by His people.
- (11) He shall be violently slain.
- (12) He shall yet live for ever.

Now, we would not maintain that all these predictions are of equal value. Only a very few are circumstantial (*e.g.* (1) and (9)). Some are not really predictions at all (*e.g.* (3) and (4)). Nor, as the prophets spoke them, did they all necessarily refer to one person. It is an easy matter to take them one by one, and show the mean-

ing that each must have had for the contemporaries of the prophet.

But, nevertheless, their cumulative force is very great. All these prophecies concern the one Ruler that was to come in Jehovah's name. To Him they all have reference. It is a marvellous picture, but it has a kaleidoscopic character. True, there seems to be an underlying harmony—we can, in fact, trace how one thought led on to another—but it is perplexing in its variety. There is but One for whom these predictions have ever been considered as preparatory, but One in whom all that was essential for their fulfilment has ever been regarded as accomplished. Whether this claim may be justly sustained, will be considered in a later chapter. At present we will notice one single point. The prophecies we have been discussing, all have reference to the future *King* of Israel. Now this fact may be explained in a number of ways: we may refer to the Semitic conception of God as a king, or to the monarchical constitution of Israel, but we must not forget that by explaining the fact we do not thereby explain it away. The fact remains, that these Hebrew prophets expected a king, and we still have the record of their expectations. Turning our eyes to the New Testament, we find a most remarkable correspondence. It was as a king that Christ was born, it was as a king that He died, as a king that He was recognized by the Roman authority and the Galilean pilgrims no less than by His own disciples. It was a king that He Himself claimed to be when face to face with the Imperial governor. Again, we may explain the

fact, but no amount of explanations will alter it. Thus did the prophets bear witness to the Christ. But how was the latter a king? What is the idea underlying kingship which bound together Old Testament and New? Surely it is to be found in the person of One whom we can reverence and obey. It expresses "the first of all needs for this distracted world, that it is to be governed, to be bound together in a common work appointed by a common ruling head."¹ This is indisputably what Christianity offered, what Prophecy foretold. Is not this evidential? The answer is sometimes evaded. We are told that the Babylonians and Assyrians also had Messianic hopes. In the present state of our knowledge it would be unwise to dogmatize on the subject. Let us, however, admit that the Babylonians may have also formulated a definite belief in a coming deliverer. But that in itself is nothing. What does the existence of the ideal prove without its realization? Of what does the prophecy give evidence, if it can claim no fulfilment? To those who press such views on our notice in disproof of the evidential character of Hebrew prophecy, we have our answer ready: "Show us your Jesus Christ!"

ADDITIONAL NOTES.

I. On Is. ix. 7. Cf. Page 196.

So Driver, *loc. cit.* Duhm, *Jes.*, 65 ; Dillmann, p. 89 (both speak of a "Davidide" in this connection). Cornill, p. 60 "ein menschlicher König aus David's Geschlecht." G. A. Smith, *Isaiah*, p. 138, "xi. 1-5, tells us for the first and only time by Isaiah's lips

¹ Hort, *Cambridge Sermons*, p. 28.

hat the Messiah is to be a scion of David's house." Davidson, p. 359, "The promise is made that one, who is called God with us, shall come out of the house of David." Ewald's *Hist.*, iv. 204, "Isaiah still speaks of David's house as a foundation of sacred hope." Eugen Hühn, p. 20, "An der Spitze des neuen Reiches steht ein Davidide." Ottley, *Hebrew Prophets*, p. 37, "A king of David's line," "the prediction of a Davidic King," "a scion of David's house." Skinner, *Isaiah*, vol. i. p. 76, "the Messiah succeeds to David's throne, and is doubtless conceived as his lineal descendant." Delitzsch, *Messianische Weiss.*, p. 114, "Ein Davidide muss er sein." Cheyne more cautiously, "seems to imply that the Messiah was to be one of the King's descendants." W. R. Smith, *Prophets of Israel*, p. 277, "a reign of perpetual peace begins under a child of the seed of David." Riehm, p. 279, seems to be of the same opinion—"In the Messias (particularly in the prophets of the Assyrian period, p. 278), both the people and the royal house of David, and especially the latter, will again be uplifted to glory." Cf. p. 186, "Davidic Messias," 187, "Davidic Kingship."

The consensus of these scholars is all the more extraordinary, as in their notes on the actual passage they seem to realize that Isaiah does *not* say, "A Son of David shall sit on his throne." Thus Duhm, "auf David's Stuhl thront ein dem David gleichender Fürst." Delitzsch, *Commentary*, vol. i. p. 249, after alluding to "the great descendant of David," speaks of the rejection of "such bad Davidic kings as Ahaz," and the raising up of "the true king, in whom that which was typified in David and Solomon, culminates as in its antitype." Again, on p. 210, in discussing the significance of Immanuel, he remarks: "He who is the pledge of the continued existence of Judah does not come until the present degenerate house of David, which is bringing Judah to the brink of destruction, is removed, even to the stump." Again, he heads this section in his *Mess. Weiss.*, p. 113, with the title "Beginn einer neuen Zeit mit dem neuen Erben des davidischen Thrones." He proceeds, "der geweissagte Sohn der Jungfrau ist nun geboren (on his conception of the relation of this son to the Davidic dynasty, see above), und der Prophet indem sein ideales Leben in der Zukunft sich

fortsetzt, begrüsst und feiert ihn als den Erben des davidischen Thrones." Dillmann, p. 94, commenting on the verse, proceeds, "daraus hervorgeht dass er als Fortsetzer und Vollender des alten Davidreichs in Zion gedacht ist." G. A. Smith on Immanuel is prepared "to suppose that Isaiah shook himself loose from the tradition which entailed the royal family upon Judah," and later comments on this passage as follows: "We cannot see whether He springs from the house of David, but He shall reign on David's throne with righteousness for ever," pp. 134, 136. Under these circumstances, I cannot understand why "the Messiah reigning on David's throne is *doubtless* conceived as his lineal descendant." As W. R. Smith says in another passage, "It is by no means clear that Isaiah ever put to himself the question whether the new offshoot from the root of Jesse is to be one person or a race of sovereigns. It is the function and equipment of the kingship, not the person of the king, that absorbs all his attention," p. 306.

It will thus be realized that in presuming to differ from critics so numerous and illustrious, I am only arriving at a conclusion consistent with their own premises, and which to my mind seems demanded by the words of Scripture.

II. On "the Mighty God" in x. 21 of pages 221-223.

But there remains yet another possibility. Duhm, it is true, regards the whole section as a very late interpolation, on the ground that Isaiah could not have spoken of Israel as *no more again staying upon him that smote him*. One thinks, of course, of Ahaz's policy of alliance with Assyria; but this cannot be, says Duhm, inasmuch as smiting Israel was just exactly what Assyria did not do. The kings of that country seem, however, to have been of a different opinion.¹ And, if Isaiah did not enter-

¹ Hear Sennacherib's own words: *But Hezekiah, king of Judah, I besieged, forty-six of his strong cities and small cities with their environs without number I took them, 200,150 men, young, old, male and female . . . I counted them as spoil. Himself I shut up as a caged bird in Jerusalem, his royal city. To the former tribute paid yearly, I added the tribute of alliance of my lordship. With 30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver, precious stones, a heavy treasure, and his daughters,*

tain the same view as the Assyrian monarchs, it is difficult to see why he should address them as *the rod of Jehovah's anger, the staff of his indignation*, or why he should have predicted that he would *smite Israel with a rod, and lift up his staff against her*, or, again, that *his burden should be removed, and his yoke should be broken*.¹ But in this connection he gives us a valuable hint which we shall do well to follow up. "Wo wäre eine alte Weissagung die sich nach der Meinung der Späteren über die ganze Zukunft erstreckt ohne Interpolationen und kleinen Nachhülfen geblieben?"² This may be an exaggerated view to take, but it supplies us with what is at least a very probable explanation of what must strike every reader as a peculiar characteristic of this passage. The chapter as a whole deals with judgment. It is not really till 24 that the prophet turns to comfort his people. In particular, the remnant is carefully explained as being the result of an extermination decreed, overflowing in righteousness. "A remnant" is plainly equivalent to "only a remnant." *For though thy people Israel* (not yet *my people that dwelleth in Zion*, 24) *be as the sand of the sea, (only) a remnant shall turn*. From this one certainly gathers the impression that verse 21 may be an intrusion. Perhaps it was introduced to call attention to the double meaning of *the turning of the remnant*, to which Isaiah himself seems to have given occasional expression.

III. On Psalm xlv. 6. Cf. page 235.

In Ps. xlv. 6 the Psalmist appears to be addressing the king :

*Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever,
The sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre.*

On which Calvin comments "non dubium est quin Divina majestas Christi notetur." It seems that all ancient versions

his women of the palace, his young men and young women, to Nineveh the city of my lordship, I caused to be brought after me, and he sent his ambassadors to give tribute and to pay homage.

¹ Duhm admits the genuineness of the first two references.

² Duhm, *H.K. Jes.*, p. 75.

(except perhaps LXX) took אֱלֹהִים as the vocative, and we have no right to close the question by supposing that "it is scarcely possible that אֱלֹהִים can be addressed to a king."¹ But we are met by some linguistic objections :

- (a) עוֹלָם never occurs anywhere else as a predicate.
- (β) The use of אֱלֹהִים here for the king would have been open to very grave misunderstanding in the face of אֱלֹהִים אֶחָד in 8.
- (γ) There is a strong presumption that in both places אֱלֹהִים was substituted for יְהוָה.

Some of these objections are removed by taking אֱלֹהִים in this passage as addressed to God, but this makes a somewhat awkward interruption.

On the other hand, we can find no other instance of a king being directly called god. It is indeed argued :

- (1) That judges were sometimes so-called. Cf. esp. 1 S. ii. 25.
- (2) That there are instances of the special application to men, Ex. vii. 1, 1 S. xxviii. 13.
- (3) That in Psalm lxxii. we have אֱלֹהִים used of the princes.
- (4) That Isaiah greets the birth of the Messianic King with the title אֱלֹהֵי גִבּוֹר.
- (5) That the passage is so quoted in the N.T.

Now, whether this last is the case or not, it must not preclude our enquiry into the meaning of the words as they stand here. The use of Isaiah we have already discussed ; on any showing it is different from suddenly and unexpectedly addressing an actual king as אֱלֹהִים. With regard to (1) and (2) it may be legitimately pointed out that this case is totally different because it has none of those qualifications or limitations expressed or suggested by the parallels adduced. The same may be said of Ps. lxxii., where the princes' claim to be *gods and children of the Most High* rests upon the Divine

¹ Westcott, *Heb.*, p. 24.

decree. *I said "ye are gods"*: they receive divine authority by divine appointment.

All things considered, we are very doubtful whether the words as they stand can be understood as an address to the king or to Jehovah.

If the vocative is excluded, there are three other possible constructions:

- (1) *Thy god-throne is for ever and ever.* This seems to be grammatically justifiable, though the parallels usually cited are further definitions of the subject. It is also open to the objection of **ועד ועלם** being the predicate.
- (2) *Thy throne is (a throne of) God.* This rendering is also disputed on grammatical grounds, but it is adopted by a number of German and English scholars. The idea is well illustrated by 1 Chron. xxix. 23, where the Davidic king sits **על כסא יהוה**.
- (3) *God is thy throne, or thy throne is God*—the rendering adopted by Bp. Westcott, who thinks that even in Heb. i. 8 the direct application of the Divine Name to the Son would obscure the thought. There is some justification for this rendering in the LXX, which reads $\acute{o} \theta\epsilon\acute{o}s$. Aquila unambiguously employs $\theta\epsilon\acute{\epsilon}$. But it may be doubted whether so unusual a phrase does not go considerably beyond such expression as God being a *rock, fortress, dwelling-place* (cf. Ps. lxxi. 3, xc. 1, xci. 1, 2).

More than one emendation has been proposed. To omit **אלהים** altogether is so arbitrary as to be unjustifiable. Driver approves of the substitution of **סעד** for **ועד**, and the suggestion that the Elohist compiler mistook **נִתְּנָה** for **נִתְּנָה** offers an ingenious and welcome solution of the difficulty, and has found much favour. But all these conjectures ignore the fact that it is not the duration but the character of the kingdom to which the Psalmist would call our attention. There is, however, one emendation (which I cannot find has suggested

itself to any critic) which would really solve all difficulties. My only hesitation in putting it forward is that it is so simple that I feel it must have occurred to some scholars and been rejected by them for sufficient reasons. I would simply double the kaph and read כסא־כפא־להים = *Thy throne is as God*. The omission of one of the re-duplicated letters can easily be accounted for, while in sense we should have an exact parallel to Zech. xii. 8, וְהָיָה בֵּית דָּוִד כְּאֱלֹהִים.

PART III.

THE COVENANT AND THE PROPHET.

§ 1. THE COVENANT.

IT is of the kingdom and the king that we have hitherto spoken, because it is under this conception that the prophets brought together most of their thoughts concerning the character of God and the nature of the Divine dealings with the human race. But there is yet another reason. The preaching of "the kingdom" was the most marked characteristic of the Gospel message, and as we are here mainly concerned with the evidential value of prophecy, we naturally examined at the greatest length those points in which prophecy seemed most directly to prepare the way for the promulgation and reception of Christianity.

The kingdom of God upon earth—this is the great hope of prophecy. The kingdom of God upon earth—this is the great fact of Christianity. It is therefore to the kingdom, and the king at its head, that we have first turned to discover the true meaning of the evidential value of Old Testament prophecy.

But if the kingdom be the central doctrine of prophetic literature, there are other thoughts and expectations running parallel to this main idea, and we must not allow their apparent contradictions to conceal from us their close inter-connection. Foremost among such conceptions is that of a covenant. There were not a few difficulties—religious and otherwise—which the theory of a universal kingdom suggested, but did not solve. It was the idea of a covenant which supplied the needful solution. For the aim and end of all religion is to produce and maintain the right relation between God and man. The Hebrew prophets conceived of this relation as finding its consummation in a union. This union of the Divine and the human it was their aim and endeavour to effect. In this attempt the idea of the kingdom came to their aid, as carrying with it all those associations most suitable for the expression of their thoughts. But this kingdom must have an inward as well as an outward life—it must have an intensive as well as an extensive force. And it was in explanation of this inward, intensive aspect of the Divine kingdom that the idea of a covenant attained its great importance. Though the covenant-idea may not have been definitely formulated until many centuries had passed away since the establishment of the monarchy, yet the covenant was really the religious basis on which the kingdom, nay the whole nation, reposed.

Now, a covenant is an agreement between two persons, and thus involves a reciprocity of obligations. That is to say, a conditional character belongs to the very essence of a covenant. We

have already considered the conditional nature of all God's promises and threats—a view so clearly and forcibly enunciated by Jeremiah in his 18th chapter—and as a covenant is always made for the advantage of at least one of the contracting parties, it is a kind of promise, and is therefore subject to the same conditions of fulfilment as the other promises of God. Nay more, a promise is usually presented as something unconditional, while a covenant is expressly stated to depend upon the fulfilment by both parties of the conditions on which they had agreed.

But at this stage another element enters into our consideration. We have hitherto been discussing the idea of a covenant in general, but when Scripture introduces God as entering into covenant with man, certain modifications of our view become necessary. In the first place, God Himself has nothing to gain by making any such covenant. He is moved to do so only by His great love for men. He comes into covenant with His people, for His name's sake—that is, in consequence of His essential character as a loving and a merciful God. And so the covenant is, as it were, all on one side. The Giver completely overshadows the recipient. And this conviction stamped itself on the phraseology often employed in this connection. God is said to give, appoint, ordain, establish a covenant,¹ for it is with Him that the whole covenant-relation originated: He is its sole author. But from a recognition of this fact another consequence follows

¹ נתן הקים שים are all used in this connection as well as ברית; and the Greek διαθήκη instead of συνθήκη is due to the same cause.

of necessity. If God has made the covenant independently of man, we can see that man's failure to fulfil his part cannot absolutely or permanently invalidate the gracious purposes of God implied in the making of this covenant. Man's sin may interrupt or obscure or even suspend for a time the true relation between God and man, but it can never frustrate the object which God had in view when making the covenant. There is something unconditioned and unalterable in the Will of God, and though we must beware of using language which might seem to imply that "the decree of election once passed can neither be as though it had not been, nor yet can it be made of none effect"¹—which is precisely the attitude adopted by later Judaism²—we may yet agree with the proposition that "the promises which God made in early times to His people cannot be annulled through the guilt of one generation, or even of several generations, nor can the purpose of grace for which Israel was chosen be stultified."

It is in the word "purpose," as St. Paul saw, that we must seek for the real explanation of the two apparently irreconcilable factors of God's Will and man's sin. Man is a free moral being; he can resist the Will of God. But yet there must be a time when God is all in all. Hence we shall best express our belief by asserting that though the covenant may be finally abrogated, yet that such is never the case until the purpose for which the covenant was originally made has been fully attained.

¹ Riehm, p. 74.

² For references cf. S. and H., *Romans*, p. 249.

This was the belief that led the prophets to their announcement that there would be a *new* covenant. They felt that the punishments inflicted on Israel for her unfaithfulness were a discipline intended rather to produce national reformation, than to bring about the penal annihilation of the guilty people. And so Jeremiah can plead in the name of Israel, *O Lord, correct me, but with judgment, not in thine anger, lest thou bring me to nothing. Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name.*¹ But if this view of Israel's chastisement was correct, if the purpose of God could not, must not, be frustrated by His creatures, it was impossible to suppose that this chastisement would never bear fruit. The time would come, the prophets declared, when the people would at length become in very reality what it was in name, the people of Jehovah; and when He would remove all the hindrances which now prevented men from recognizing Him as their God. The prophets thus looked forward to a time when Jehovah would, as before, originate a new covenant—new not in its terms, but in its force; when Jehovah would give to all the world a crowning proof of His constant mercy and boundless love—a manifestation of Divine grace, issuing in the complete forgiveness of sins and removing every other obstacle that hindered the true union of God and man.

But this was not yet to be. Israel had to be trained by successive covenants to realize the imperfections of the present theocracy, and to wait patiently

¹ Jer. x. 24.

for the time when God should make a new covenant with them. Let us now glance at the previous covenants in the history of Israel which were designed to lead the nation on to expect "the better promises" of a different dispensation.

Every Jew looked back with loving pride to Abraham, the founder of the race. They could call themselves *the seed of Abraham, the friend of God*.¹ They boasted that they were children of Abraham;² and in the covenant that God made with him, God had made a covenant with the whole race. The terms of this covenant were such as to justify their belief. They contained the promise of a "seed," and also a promise to Abraham's descendants that they should inherit the land of Canaan. Such was the promise of God; and what then was the agreement of Abraham? It was profoundly simple. *Abraham believed on God, and he counted it unto him for righteousness*.³ The covenant was inaugurated by sacrifice, and sealed by the sign of circumcision. This, then, was the first covenant to which every Jew looked back as the first covenant of his nation with God.

But there was yet an earlier covenant of universal significance to which the prophets allude.⁴ After the flood, God graciously bound Himself never again to destroy mankind. This Noachic covenant is alluded to in Is. xxiv. 5, where the Divine judge-

¹ Is. xli. 6; cf. Ps. cv. 6.

² St. Luke iii. 9.

³ Gen. xv. 6.

⁴ It is most unlikely that the prophets thought of a covenant with Adam. The reading in Hos. vi. 7 is very doubtful, and Adam is not to be thought of in Is. xliii. 17. *Thy first father* is shown by the context to be Jacob.

ment upon the earth is ascribed to the fact that *the inhabitants thereof have broken the everlasting covenant*—that is to say, they have violated those fundamental laws of morality which constituted man's side of this universally binding covenant between God and man, especially in regard to the sacredness of human life.¹ Again, in Is. liv. 9, Jehovah speaks, *As the days of Noah is this to me.*² *For as I have sworn that the waters of Noah should no more go over the earth, so have I sworn that I would not be wroth with thee, nor forget thee.*

It might be considered that the covenant with Abraham, the father of the Jewish nation, is a very retrograde step from the covenant with mankind in the person of Noah—but such a criticism overlooks more than one consideration. The Noachic covenant forms part of the “priestly code,” and is therefore considerably later than the original account of the covenant with Abraham. Moreover, while the covenant with Noah by the mention of *the God of Shem*³ indicates the Divine selection of a special people, the covenant with Abraham betrays its universalistic tendency by stating that *in Abraham and his seed all families of the earth should be blessed.*⁴

The next covenant was the Sinaitic. God had out of His own love redeemed Israel from Egypt. The cause was not to be found in Israel's deserts

¹ Gen. viii. 22, ix. 5, 6, 9-11.

² Read כִּי מִי for כִּי מִי.

³ Gen. ix. 26.

⁴ More accurately “bless themselves,” i.e. wish for themselves the Divine blessing of which Abraham and his seed were such remarkable examples.

or attainments. It lay in the fact of God's unfathomable love. This is the immense significance of Hosea for the religion of Israel. Amos had preached judgement and doom, Hosea was the prophet of love and mercy. *When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt.*¹ Amos had also appealed to the Egyptian deliverance as constituting a unique relation between Israel and Jehovah.² Hosea realized that the relationship was one of love. How beautifully does he describe "the loving correction" of Jehovah. *Behold I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak to her heart . . . and she shall sing there as in the days of her youth and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.*³ All that God required in return for His love was obedience. To this Jeremiah refers: *Cursed be the man that obeyeth not the word of this covenant, which I commanded your fathers in the day that I brought them forth out of the land of Egypt, saying, Obey my voice and do them according to all which I command you—so shall ye be my people and I will be your God.*⁴ This then was the promise of the Sinaitic Covenant—*My people, Your God*. It originated solely in the love of God. It was based upon the Ten Words.⁵ It had its sign and symbol in the Ark of the Covenant, its sacrament, if we may employ the word in this connection, in the observance of the Sabbath.

We now come to the last national covenant—the Deuteronomic. Deuteronomy is, in fact, "the book

¹ Hosea xi. 1.

² Amos iii. 2.

³ Hosea ii. 14, 15.

⁴ Jer. xi. 3, 4.

⁵ Cf. Ps. xxv. 10.

of the covenant," and it is thoroughly penetrated by this idea, and nothing is more remarkable than the influence it exercised on the prophets in this direction. Previously they had hardly spoken of a covenant,¹ though the idea seems to have been present to their minds; but since the publication of this book, the covenant-relation becomes one of the most important topics in Post-exilic literature. Deuteronomy dwells much on the fatherly care of Jehovah for His people, and sums up Israel's side of the agreement as a whole-hearted love for their God. *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might.*² This was the last covenant between the nation and God. *The king made a covenant before the Lord to walk after the Lord and to keep his commandments and his testimonies and his statutes with all his heart and all his soul and to confirm the words of this covenant that were written in this book, and all the people stood to the covenant.*³

But it was of no avail. The righteous king himself fell in battle. The inevitable reaction set in among the people. Jerusalem was laid waste by the Babylonian army, its inhabitants carried away into exile *in a strange land.*⁴ The covenant seemed to have been irrevocably broken. It was, however, left to the prophets to trace the cause of this calamity in the national sin. Were that once removed, the covenant would be renewed, and the inheritance of Canaan would be restored. The prophets thus began to look forward to a new

¹ Both the allusions in Hos. are disputed.

² Deut. vi. 5.

³ 2 Kings xxiii. 3.

⁴ Ps. cxxxvii. 4.

covenant, or to a renewal of the old covenant in a more spiritual and holy form than had ever previously been known. For its terms were precisely the same as those of the old covenant. *I will be their God, and they shall be my people*; ¹ since this was the aim of all religion—the true relation of God and man.

Let us pause for a moment to consider the terms in which this relation was expressed.

In the first place God was the Father of His people—*Israel is my son, my first-born* ² is the message of Jehovah to the King of Egypt; and repentant Israel cries, *My father, thou art the guide of my youth*. ³ *Is not he thy father that bought thee?* ⁴ This belief in the Fatherhood of God was a very real one for the Jewish nation. In deepest distress they could yet say, *Doubtless, thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us and Israel acknowledge us not: Thou, O Lord, art our Father, our Redeemer*. ⁵ In a special sense He is the Father of the Messianic king—*I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a son*, ⁶ or again, *Thou art my son, this day have I begotten thee*, ⁷ or yet again, *He shall call me, Thou art my father*. ⁸ But the Fatherhood of God was not confined to the king. He is also *the father of the fatherless*. ⁹ This doctrine was so thoroughly established that Malachi could argue, *If then I be a father, where is mine honour?* ¹⁰ and the Psalmist could sing of God's loving care for

¹ Jer. xxxi. 33; Ez. xi. 20.

² Ex. iv. 22. Cf. Hosea xi. 1.

³ Jer. iii. 4; cf. also xxxi. 9.

⁴ Deut. xxxii. 6. ⁵ Is. lxiii. 16.

⁶ 2 Samuel vii. 14.

⁷ Ps. ii. 7.

⁸ Ps. lxxxix. 27.

⁹ Ps. lxviii. 5.

¹⁰ Mal. i. 6.

all faithful Israelites—*Yea, as a father pitieth his own children, so is the Lord merciful unto those that fear him.*¹ It is plain how this belief must have *prepared the way* for the teaching of Christ on the universal Fatherhood of God, and not only so, but also for that double ramification of the doctrine observable in Christ's discourses. The fatherhood to the Messianic king corresponds to His *ὁ πατήρ μου*, the fatherhood to the nation, to His *ὁ πατήρ ὑμῶν*, and it must be obvious how nearly the last quotation approaches the petition in the Lord's Prayer—*Our Father which art in heaven, . . . forgive us our trespasses.*

The other term chosen to express this covenant relation was drawn from the marriage bond. It seems probable that his sad domestic experience first suggested to Hosea the suitability of this metaphor. Now, it is true that the idea was not created by this prophet. It was a fairly common conception that the national god was wedded to the land over which he presided. But that it was at one time universal among the Semitic peoples is attested by the use of the word to denote the Godhead (Baal = Lord, Husband)—the name, as it appears, by which Jehovah Himself was originally known.² But if Hosea did not create the idea, he re-created it. He stripped it of all its physical and degrading associations, and presented it pure and without spot. *I will betroth thee unto me for*

¹ Ps. ciii. 13.

² Cf. Hosea ii. 16, and compare such names as Ish-baal (bosheth), Meri-baal, etc.

ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness and in judgement and in loving kindness and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness, and thou shalt know the Lord.¹ This view profoundly influenced later prophecy. Deutero-Isaiah dwells on the subject with much tenderness. *Zion said—The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will not I forget thee.*² For a relation so close, so tender, must be as eternal as the love which suggested the application of the metaphor. It cannot be supposed to be the emblem of a short-lived passion. *Where is the bill of your mother's divorcement?*³ Where indeed? It does not exist. Jehovah is God, not man, and though Judah may have deserved such hard treatment, yet He dealt not with her after her sins, nor rewarded her according to her iniquities. *Hast thou seen that which back-sliding Israel hath done? And when for this very cause, that back-sliding Israel had committed adultery, I had put her away and given her a bill of divorcement, yet treacherous Judah feared not; but she also went and played the harlot. But the marriage bond is indissoluble. Return, thou back-sliding Israel, saith the Lord, and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you, for I am merciful, saith the Lord. Turn, O back-sliding children, saith the Lord, for I am married to you,⁴ and I will take*

¹ Hosea ii. 19, 20.² Is. xlix. 14-16.³ Is. i. 1.

Ja 31/37 בעלתי בכם. The construction with ב is perhaps suspicious, and in the parallel passage xxxi. 32, LXX has ἡμελησα. Hence conjecture נעלתי, but it cannot be said that this is an improvement.

*you one of a city and two of a family and bring you to Zion.*¹

It is scarcely necessary to point out how this mode of expression, together with the underlying idea, influenced the Pauline and Johannine representations of the relation of the Church to Christ. Once more we find the doctrine of the prophets *preparing the way* for a great Christian mystery—*I speak as concerning Christ and the Church.*²

Now when the later prophets looked forward to a new covenant, there was one respect in particular in which they made an immense advance on the teaching of their predecessors. The latter had indeed grasped many of the essential ideas of the covenant, but the covenanting parties were always Jehovah and the nation. The individual Israelite could only hold communion with his God in so far as he was a member of the covenanted kingdom of Israel. But already there had been more than one indication that the covenant might become as it were de-nationalized without losing any of its force. We refer to the fact that families as well as the nation were selected for this special honour. Of the covenant with David we have already had occasion to speak at length. We would now only notice how the phrase *for my servant David's sake* implies the possibility of a distinctly personal relation to Jehovah. It was the same with Levi. *My covenant was with Levi for life and peace because he feared me and stood in awe of my name.*³ In Numbers xxv. the giving of this everlasting covenant is said to have been the reward of the zeal of Phinehas, and in Jer. xxxiii. 21, the

¹ Jer. iii. 6-16.

² Eph. v. 32.

³ Mal. ii. 4.

covenant of David and the covenant of Levi are placed side by side as eternally valid.

Now Jeremiah's own religion was of a very subjective character. His temperament led him to reflect more on his own than on his nation's relation to Jehovah—and further, the whole tendency of the age was towards individualism, as may be seen from the very individualistic theories of retribution which we find both in Jeremiah and Ezekiel. So it was not a far step from what was already conceded to assert that this new covenant—the same in essence as the old—should be individually apprehended. Let us now quote Jeremiah's grand prophecy on this subject.

*Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah ; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt: which my covenant they brake although I was an husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart I will write it, and I will be their God and they shall be my people: and they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them. For I will forgive their iniquity and their sins will I remember no more.*¹

Nowhere have we a more explicit statement of individual religion. Hosea had spoken of the time when Israel should *know the Lord*,² and Isaiah had

¹ Jer. xxxi. 31-34.

² Hos. ii. 22.

predicted that the *earth should be full of the knowledge of the Lord as the waters cover the sea*,¹ but Jeremiah is the first to make this knowledge an individual possession. He is followed by the Prophet of the Exile—*All thy children shall be taught of the Lord—or, more literally, shall be disciples of Jehovah, and great shall be the peace of thy children*.²

But this covenant is not only individual but spiritual. It is not an external act, such as the Egyptian deliverance or even the Babylonian Exodus,³ that effects this individual realization and appropriation of the covenant-blessings. It is an “inward writing,” and it lies in the operation of the Spirit. *I will give them one heart, and I will put a new spirit within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of their flesh, and will give them an heart of flesh, that they may walk in my statutes and keep mine ordinances and do them; and they shall be my people and I will be their God*.⁴ This effusion of the Spirit was to be one of the most marked characteristics of the latter days—*I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring*,⁵—and Joel predicts an outpouring so universal that *even servants and handmaids* will not be excluded from the prophetic gift.⁶

And the result would correspond to this spiritual agency. For God *will create a new heaven and a new earth, and the former shall not be remembered, nor come into mind*.⁷ A very remarkable illustration of this principle is given by Jeremiah. *In those days shall they no more say, The ark of the covenant of the*

¹ Is. xi. 9.² Is. liv. 13.³ Jer. xxiii. 7, 8.⁴ Ezek. xi. 19-20.⁵ Is. xlv. 3.⁶ Joel ii. 29.⁷ Is. lxv. 17.

*Lord; neither shall it come to mind; neither shall they miss it; neither shall it be made any more.*¹ For the heaven is my throne, saith the Lord, and the earth is my footstool: where is the house that ye build unto me?²

The covenant is therefore spiritual as well as individual; accordingly it is also universal.

Joel speaks of the Spirit descending upon *all flesh*.³ It has been suggested that the words *all flesh* must be restricted to Israel, but it is very doubtful whether Joel had any such limitations in view. It is more than possible that one of his mental presuppositions was that the kingdom of God would be composed exclusively of Israelites. But this is nowhere actually stated. What he does state is that upon every member of this kingdom, including those engaged in the most menial occupations, the Spirit should be poured out. We have no right to draw conclusions, however obvious or logically necessary they may appear to us, which the prophets were careful to leave undrawn. Accordingly, we believe that when Joel spoke of all flesh, his words may be taken as a distinct evidence of the universalistic outlook of Holy Scripture, and that the words are intended to include every single member of the perfected theocracy. In this connection we may also notice the extension of the covenant to Jewish proselytes. The removal of the religious disabilities of eunuchs and proselytes is a fitting prelude to the great outpouring. *Even them, if they will but hold fast my covenant, I will bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer. For mine house shall be called a house*

¹ Jer. iii. 16.

² Is. lxvi. 1.

³ Joel ii. 28-32.

*of prayer for all peoples. The Lord God which gathereth the outcasts of Israel saith—Yet will I gather others unto him besides those that are gathered unto him.*¹ In such a passage as this we have the true preparation for Joel's language, and for the words of Him who said : *Other sheep I have which are not of this fold : them also must I bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one flock, one shepherd.*²

The covenant—individual, spiritual, universal—is of no temporary significance. It has eternal validity. Thus, when God revealed Himself to Abraham as God Almighty, He declared : *I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee. And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and thy seed after thee.*³ The same thought is expressed in the priests' code : *If their uncircumcised heart be humble, and they then accept of the punishment of their iniquity, then will I remember my covenant with Jacob, with Isaac, with Abraham—indeed, however great their iniquity I will not reject them, neither will I abhor them to destroy them utterly, and to break my covenant with them, for I am the Lord their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors whom I brought forth out of the land of Egypt, that I might be their God.*⁴ Similarly, the covenants with David and Levi were considered to have an everlasting character. If then such "eternity" could be predicated of the old covenant—for,

¹ Is. lvi. 1-8.

² St. John x. 16.

³ Gen. xvii. 6-7.

⁴ Lev. xxvi. 41-45.

as the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews skilfully argues, a new covenant implies an old one, and *that which becometh old is nigh unto vanishing away*¹—with how much more justice could it be applied to the new covenant, whose validity, being of a spiritual character, was independent of any external observances for its continued existence? And so Jeremiah affirms the endlessness of this new covenant by a reference to the unchanging ordinances of the moon and the stars;² and Ezekiel, speaking of the restored community, introduces Jehovah as saying: *Moreover, I will make a covenant of peace with them; it shall be an everlasting covenant with them.*³

The covenant is everlasting, but it is also individual. Now, it was along these lines that Psalmists and Poets approached the doctrine of personal immortality. The Psalmists, in particular, had realized so vividly in their inner experience the blessings of this covenant-relation with God, that it began to put death completely out of their sight. The contrast of life here and hereafter became for them the contrast of life with and without God. But assured of God's perpetual presence and constant guidance, they began to feel the further conviction that a communion so sweet, so intimate, so divine, would not and could not be abruptly terminated by death. This is the most likely explanation of Ps. lxxiii. 23-26:

*And I—I was continually with thee,
Thou hast holden mine right hand,
Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel,
And afterwards receive me to glory.*

¹ Heb. viii. 13.² Jer. xxxi. 35-37.³ Ezek. xxxvii. 26.

*Whom have I in heaven but thee?
And there is none upon earth I desire beside thee.
My flesh and my heart faileth,
But God is the strength of my heart and my portion for
ever.*¹

And somewhat similarly it became painfully clear that the true covenant-relation could never be perfectly realized in the unfortunate conditions of the present. It was in vain to beseech God to *look upon the covenant, for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty*.² The devout Israelite began to long for a resurrection;³ but it was only after a struggle that he finally rose to the certainty that God would yet appear to vindicate and redeem him, and that death would but lead to an unclouded vision of God.

*I know that my redeemer liveth,
And that he shall stand up at the last upon the earth,
And after my skin hath been thus destroyed,
Yet from my flesh⁴ shall I see God:
Whom I shall see for myself,
And mine eye shall behold, and not another.*⁵

Here then is unfolded the true significance of the covenant, when viewed in the light of national experience and personal expectation. Well might Zion be comforted with the assurance of Jehovah's endless

¹ It must, however, be admitted that Prof. Kirkpatrick makes out a very good case for interpreting the words as an expression of the Psalmist's "confidence that God will guide him safely through his present troubles, so that in the end honour not shame will be his lot." But such an interpretation hardly seems to do sufficient justice to v. 26, with which the whole passage stands in the closest connection.

² Ps. lxxiv. 20.

³ Job xiv. 7-15.

⁴ *I.e.* apart from, deprived of my flesh. See A. B. Davidson *in loco*.

⁵ Job xix. 25-27.

love. *I will direct their work in truth, and I will make an everlasting covenant with them; and their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the peoples: all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed.*¹

It will have been noted that Ezekiel speaks of a *covenant of peace*, and it is in keeping with the thoroughly individualistic tendencies of the prophetic "covenant" that the great obstacle to the inauguration of this peaceful era is to be found not so much in foreign oppression as in national sin. Accordingly, the prophets combined the promise of forgiveness with that of restoration. Thus the closing words of Jeremiah's oracle quoted above announce that Jehovah will *forgive their iniquity, and their sins will He remember no more*; ² and Ezekiel explains how the new covenant will take effect. *I will save them from all their backslidings* ³ *wherein they have sinned and will cleanse them; so shall they be my people and I will be their God.*⁴

Now, here we meet with the idea of forgiveness, and it is significant that it is brought into closest connection with the New Covenant. This forgiveness is always represented as the free act of God, even though in a sense Israel may be said to have expiated her sins:

*Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God;
Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem and cry unto her
That her hard service is accomplished,
That her iniquity is pardoned,
For she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins.*⁵

¹ Is. lxi. 8-9. ² Jer. xxxi. 34. ³ מַשְׁבִּי is plainly a mis-spelling for 'מַשְׁבִּי.

⁴ Ezek. xxxvii. 23.

⁵ Is. xl. 1, 2.

Jehovah's penal purpose may be satisfied by temporary punishment, but this is not equivalent to actual atonement. For there is nothing to prevent the same situation occurring again and again. History, in fact, shows that such was the case. There could, therefore, be no finality about such a theory. Something more satisfying was required.

The prophets accordingly looked for a great act of Jehovah's sin-forgiving grace. *In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and for uncleanness.*¹ *Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean: from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and I will put my spirit within you, and ye shall be my people and I will be your God.*²

Here, again, forgiveness was connected with the covenant. Now this was perfectly natural, since the prophets looked upon the new covenant as the guarantee of the restoration of all things. But we shall probably not be much mistaken if we seek for a somewhat closer connection of ideas.

A covenant was always associated with sacrifice. This was the case with Abraham,³ and a similar custom seems to have prevailed till a late period.⁴ But in connection with the Sinaitic covenant we read of a more significant rite. The blood of the sacrifice was sprinkled on the altar, and then on the people. It is most uncertain what this ceremony actually symbolized. It appears likely that the blood

¹ Zech. xiii. 1.

² Ezek. xxxvi. 25-28.

³ Gen. xv. 17, 18.

⁴ Jer. xxxiv. 18.

sprinkled on the altar represented the life given up to God as a substitutionary and expiatory sacrifice, while the blood sprinkled on the people signified the life sanctified by God, and imparted to man. For, as has been most forcibly pointed out, "the fundamental idea of ancient sacrifice is sacramental communion, and all atoning rites are ultimately to be regarded as owing their efficacy to a communication of Divine life to the worshippers, and to the establishment or confirmation of a living bond between them and their god."¹ There is surely nothing in such a thought contrary to prophetic belief. It has been frequently asserted that the prophets could have no sympathy with sacrificial ideas or sacrificial ritual. It is true that Amos expresses his utter contempt for the theory that would exalt sacrifice above righteous conduct;² it is true that Hosea declares that God wishes to have *mercy and not sacrifice*;³ it is true that Micah speaks scornfully of *thousands of rams and ten thousands of rivers of oil*;⁴ it is true that Jeremiah points to the Exodus from Egypt and the Sinaitic covenant as teaching lessons of obedience and *not concerning burnt-offerings and sacrifices*.⁵ But the attitude of the prophets towards sacrifice is of a negative rather than a positive character. It probably did not occur to them to abolish animal sacrifice altogether. They accepted it as a natural part of their religion. But when they came to criticise the utterly false and mechanical views of their contemporaries, they were so profoundly convinced of the worthlessness of sacri-

¹ W. R. Smith, *Religion of Semites*, 439.

² Amos v. 21-24.

³ Hosea vi. 5.

⁴ Micah vi. 7.

⁵ Jer. vii. 21-23.

fice apart from the disposition of the offerer, that they declared that what God wanted was not sacrifice, but the heart and life of the worshipper.¹

It was the task of the prophets to interpret the religious usages of their day, and among these none was more prominent than sacrifice. Its enforced cessation during the Exile only turned men's minds more closely to the spiritual lessons it was intended to convey. And thus we find beyond all doubt the idea of representative substitution spiritualized in the description given of the unmerited sufferings and death of the Servant of Jehovah. He was, as it were, the sacrifice of the new covenant through which Jehovah was made "at one" with His people, and hence could bestow upon them a free and full forgiveness.

This association of the covenant with forgiveness through sacrifice may help us to explain the somewhat obscure passage in Zech. ix. 11, 12. *As for thee also, because of the blood of thy covenant² I have set forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water. Turn you again to the stronghold, ye prisoners*

¹ Thus Ps. 1., a typical prophetic psalm, which insists on the claims of morality as infinitely higher than any ritual or sacrifice, opens with a call to gather together the Saints, those which have made a *covenant* with God with *sacrifice*.

² בְּדָם בְּרִיתְךָ. The reference at first sight appears to be to the Sinaitic covenant which was solemnized with the ceremonies described above. But the suffix is peculiar. It can hardly signify my covenant that I made with thee, which would be בְּרִיתִי (xi. 10). Duhm seems right in supposing that the suffix belongs to the whole clause with special reference to דָּם. "Und die Stelle von den Opfern zu verstehen die Israel kraft des Bundes und zur Aufrechterhaltung desselben altäglich darbringt" (Duhm, *Theol.* p. 143).

*of hope ; even to-day do I declare that I will render double unto you. To whatever the blood of the covenant may refer, we have here a connection between sacrifice and covenant and restoration, which suggests an answer to the question why the new covenant is associated with the forgiveness of sins. For the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews rightly sums up the teaching of the Levitical legislation, when he remarks, According to the law, I might almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart from shedding of blood there is no remission.*¹

For we must not forget that side by side with this teaching on the covenant, the sacrificial system continued to exist, and we can learn from Malachi how largely it occupied the thoughts of the religious people of his day. So far as we can judge it received no prophetic explanation, but there it was ; and its existence could not fail to exercise a profound influence on men's minds, preparing them to recognize the need for one great all-sufficient sacrifice which should take away the sins of the world.

But there is yet another point to which the doctrine of the covenant calls our attention. The covenant postulates a mediator. This mediatorial function appears in the characterization of the Abrahamic covenant. *I will bless thee and make thy name great ; and be thou a blessing : and I will bless them that bless thee, and him that curseth thee will I curse : and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.*² In this passage Abraham is conceived as the mediator of the covenantal blessings to humanity. Similarly the Sinaitic covenant was

¹ Heb. ix. 22.

² Gen. xii. 2, 3.

ordained by the hand of a mediator.¹ For the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was;² and the same idea is expressed in Deuteronomy. *The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us. I stood between the Lord and you at that time to show you the word of the Lord: for ye were afraid.*³ We ought probably to attach the same meaning to the phrase *a covenant of people*⁴ which occurs twice in the description of the Servant of Jehovah.⁵ The servant is here called *the people's covenant* in the same sense as that in which Abraham has already been called *a blessing*. The servant will be the mediator of the new covenant. He it is for whose sake

¹ Gal. iii. 19. ² Ex. xx. 19. ³ Deut. v. 2-5. ⁴ Is. xlii. 6, xlix. 8.

⁵ The phrase in the original is בְּרִית עַם. "Much confusion and difficulty have been introduced into this passage by the failure to recognize that 'people' in v. 6 does not denote Israel. It must be explained as in v. 5, where, as in xl. 7, 'people' means mankind in general" (Kirkpatrick, *Doctrine of the Prophets*, p. 388). But this seems to overlook two facts:

- (1) That in the parallel passage (to which no reference is made in the above note) the reference is plainly to Israel, and Israel alone.
- (2) That the references to the use of people to mankind are not quite accurate. For here it is בְּרִית עַם, while in v. 5 and xl. 7 the definite article is employed, הָעַם.

We may also note that in Dt.-Is. the usual antithesis to גוֹיִם in the sense of "peoples" is not עַם, but עַמִּים or לְאֻמִּים.

The reference appears to be limited to Israel—as in the second place in which it occurs there is no reference to the Gentile world. Two constructions remain open. After the analogy of ix. 6 we may translate *a covenant of a people*="a covenant-people"—but this must strike everyone as far-fetched. The second alternative is simpler, and so we render "a people's covenant"—that is, the writer feels that the Israel of the future will be constituted on the basis of a new covenant with Jehovah.

Jehovah will make the new covenant; he it is through whom the blessing will become universally operative.

The fact that the Servant is here conceived as the mediator of the new covenant suggests our last reflection on this subject. The three great prophets of the exile all unite in bringing the covenant into relation with the Messianic age. *Behold the days come* is how Jeremiah begins, and those are the days when *he that scattered Israel will gather him and keep him as a shepherd doth his flock. For the Lord hath ransomed Jacob, and hath redeemed him from the hand of him that was stronger than he. And they shall come and sing in the height of Zion and flow together unto the goodness of the Lord.*¹ Likewise Ezekiel, after picturing the resurrection and restoration and re-union of the tribes of Israel, proceeds as follows: *I will cleanse them; so shall they be my people and I will be their God; and my servant David shall be king over them: and they shall dwell in the land wherein your fathers dwelt; and David my servant shall be their prince for ever. Moreover I will make a covenant of peace with them: it shall be an everlasting covenant.*² And Deutero-Isaiah speaks in the same strain: *I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.*³

We have now completed our examination of the prophetic doctrine of the covenant. Let us briefly summarize its leading characteristics:

- (1) The covenant had its origin in the free grace of God, and was intended for the benefit of His people.

¹ Jer. xxxi. 13.

² Ezek. xxxvii. 21-27.

³ Is. lv. 3.

- (2) It had as its avowed object the establishment of a right relation between God and man :
Ye shall be my people, and I will be your God.
- (3) Inasmuch as God's Will is unconditioned and unalterable, man's failures to fulfil the conditions laid down did not and could not invalidate His gracious purpose.
- (4) There would therefore be a crowning manifestation of God's righteousness and love.
- (5) The new covenant would be based on the same lines as the old, viz., the religious union of God and man, the Fatherhood of God, who was also the Husband of His people.
- (6) But it would differ from the old in that it would be
 individually appropriated,
 spiritually realized,
 universally operative,
 eternally valid.
- (7) The new covenant was specially associated with the forgiveness of sins.
- (8) And inasmuch as it would be perfectly effective in this direction, it would be the fulfilment of the sacrificial system with which historically it was very nearly connected.
- (9) The new covenant at least suggested the possibility of a mediator (cf. especially Is. lv.).
- (10) And as its inauguration synchronizes with the Messianic age, it would be natural to identify the Mediator of the new covenant with the Messianic Person who in the counsel of God should accomplish the salvation of His people.

No one could question the wonderful correspondence of these hopes with the Gospel truths. Indeed, we might also be excused for mistaking these prophetic anticipations for the evangelical realities, so marvellously does the New Covenant of the Prophets prepare the way for the New Covenant which Jesus Christ declared, was founded in His blood.¹

§ 2. THE PROPHET.

THE ideas of the covenant and the prophet were very closely related. In fact, the covenant consisted in a wider extension of the prophetic gift. *This is my covenant with them, saith the Lord. My spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and for ever.*² Here it is plain that Israel is addressed, for it cannot be the individual prophet, such a thing as hereditary prophecy being entirely alien to every Biblical conception.

Now, it cannot be denied that this is a national hope, and that the expectation of any individual prophet, in whom all the highest characteristics of the prophetic office will be summed up, is exceedingly rare. Indeed, it may well be questioned whether such a conception exists at all. Appeal is naturally made to Deut. xviii. 18 :

I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren like unto thee ;

¹ Lk. xxii. 20.

² Is. lix. 21.

*And I will put my words in his mouth
And he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him.
And it shall come to pass that whosoever will not hearken
unto my words which he shall speak in my name
I will require it of him.*

But the passage, when taken in connection with its context, is absolutely decisive against a personal interpretation. The prophet is to be to Israel what the diviners are to heathen nations. The latter profess to supply a constantly recurring need, and it is a similar need that the prophet is designed to satisfy in Israel. It is, therefore, to a permanent institution comprising many individuals, rather than to a particular individual, that the words refer; the passage even contemplates the possibility of some members of this prophetic order being false. "The existence of such an order in Israel, forming a permanent channel of revelation, was, of course, a signal mark of distinction between Israel and other nations of antiquity. At the same time, the terms of the description are such that it may be reasonably understood as including a reference to the ideal prophet, who should be like Moses in a pre-eminent degree, in whom the line of individual prophets should culminate, and who should exhibit the characteristics of the prophet in the fullest perfection."¹

We must remember that this "ideal" prophet does not seem to have been clearly present to the consciousness of the author of Deuteronomy, or indeed, to that of the Old Testament writers at all. Apart from the fact that we have in Scripture no allusion

¹ Driver, *Deuteronomy*, 229.

to this ideal prophet, there are three passages which are really incompatible with any such belief. Amos, the first of the canonical prophets, refused to be associated with the prophetic order altogether. *No prophet I, nor prophet's son, but an herdman and a dresser of sycamore trees. And the Lord took me from following the flock, and the Lord said unto me, Go, prophesy unto my people Israel.*¹ "Zechariah," apparently the last prophet who committed his words to writing, denies to the prophet all share and part in the Messianic kingdom. *And it shall come to pass in that day that the prophets shall be ashamed everyone of his vision when he prophesieth: neither shall they wear a hairy mantle to deceive. But he shall say I am no prophet, I am a tiller of the ground.*² Lastly, Malachi, feeling the need of a prophet to prepare the way of the Lord, does not hope for the appearance of an ideal prophet of the future, but predicts the re-incarnation of the historical Elijah.³

Now it is easy to see why the prophet did not become a Messianic figure. The prophet represented the nearest actual attainment to the idea of the covenant. The relation of God to His people found expression in many ways—in sacrifice, in pilgrimages, in the Temple worship, where men came *to see his face*,⁴ but nowhere was the relation seen to be so close, so intimate, so confidential, if we

¹ Amos vii. 14, 15.

² Zech. xiii. 4, 5.

³ Mal. iv. 5, 6.

⁴ Is. i. 12. לראות is an attempt to soften the anthropomorphical לראות, which is plainly the intention of the Kthib. Similarly Ex. xxiii. 15, where ירא has been substituted for ירא for the same reason.

may use the term,¹ and withal so spiritual,² as was the case in prophecy. But the very loftiness of the conception, combined with the comparative rarity of its realization, served only to exhibit more clearly the inherent weakness of the Old Testament theocracy. For it stood self-convicted of being unable to carry out, save in the rarest instances, its highest ideals. What those ideals were, may be seen from the prayer of Moses.

*Would God that all the people of the Lord were prophets, and that the Lord would put his spirit on them all!*³ Whatever the meaning of prophesying in this connection,⁴ the whole episode furnishes a striking commentary on the *Spirit dividing unto every man severally as he will*. The Spirit's influence bringing men into closest relation with the Divine is irrespective of family or class or space, and therefore the ideal can never be fulfilled until all are brought under its power. As long as a single prophet existed, it implied the existence of others outside the Spirit's range, and thus, when the prophets tell us of the new covenant, we can understand why they make no mention of an individual prophet, for in that day the Spirit will be poured out *upon all flesh*⁵ and *they shall teach no more every man his neighbour and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall*

¹ Cf. Amos. iii. 7.

² E.g. Micah iii. 8. Cf. Hos. ix. 7, where אִישׁ הָרוּחַ corresponds to הַנְּבִיאִים.

³ Numb. xi. 29.

⁴ It probably refers to the prophetic ecstasy. Cf. Gray, *Numb.*, 115.

⁵ Joel ii. 28.

*all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord.*¹

If then the figure of the prophet is absent from the Messianic age, it is because all are prophets, not because the idea of prophecy has been altogether eliminated. On the contrary, it has received a universal significance, and as such has a far more abiding value than it originally possessed, when brought into prominence only by local or temporary circumstances. And this is the reason why we find the conception of prophecy as a historical fact and spiritual phenomenon treated with such wonderful depth and insight by the Deutero-Isaiah in those passages concerning the Servant of the Lord, to whose work and character we must now devote our attention.

The first question that these passages suggest is one that was asked and answered long ago. *And the eunuch answering, said unto Philip, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or of another?* We might well imitate the wise reticence of the answer. *Philip beginning from this Scripture preached unto him the good news of Jesus.*² If we were dwelling on the homiletical value of these "Servant-passages" we might well with Philip leave critical questions unanswered, and proceed to use the lessons they teach of self-sacrifice and victory through persecution and death to illustrate *the good news of Jesus*. But in any attempt to estimate their apologetic and evidential value, it becomes necessary to investigate the original meaning, for unintentional evidence is really worthless for

¹ Jer. x .xi. 34.

² Acts viii. 34, 35.

our purpose. If we are to establish "the evidential value of Old Testament prophecy," we must prove that the prophets had a definite and conscious intention to *prepare the way of the Lord*. Chance coincidences and accidental similarities prove absolutely nothing. Nor, on the other hand, do dispensational divergences carry with them any disproof of our theory. We must penetrate to the inner idea. What was the deliberate meaning of the prophet? And was that meaning such as could justly be reckoned to form part of the Divine preparation for Christianity? For only then can it properly be claimed as evidential.

What, then, did the prophet himself mean by the *Servant of the Lord*?

(i.) The Servant is not a future personage. The language of prediction is never employed except where his subsequent exaltation is enlarged upon. His past and present humiliation are well known to the readers. They themselves confess the false opinion they entertained about him. No explanation therefore of the Servant's personality which ignores the fact of his past and present activity can be accepted as a legitimate interpretation of this prophecy.

(ii.) The term *Servant of Jehovah* cannot have two different meanings attached to it. It is only reasonable to suppose that wherever the term occurs it must have the same significance, or at any rate that it must be capable of being predicated, in some sense, of a single conception. The theory of a double application is intrinsically improbable, and moreover the particular application in each case

would be capable of verification only by the somewhat arbitrary process of subjective criticism. In some sense the Servant of Jehovah must be the same throughout.

(iii.) Now there can be no doubt that the Servant is frequently identified with Israel; for instance, *But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen. I have said unto thee, Thou art my servant: I have chosen thee and not cast thee away.*¹ It is possible that Jeremiah had anticipated our prophet in applying this designation to the people of Israel. *Fear thou not, O Jacob, my servant, saith Jehovah, neither be dismayed, O Israel.*² At any rate, we find a kind of transitional use in Ezekiel. *And they shall dwell in the land that I have given unto Jacob my servant wherein your fathers have dwelt.*³ Here Jacob may mean the ancestor of the people, but it probably also connotes the idea of the nation which regarded him as its father. Now, we should further observe that it is not only Israel, but the actual historical Israel that is meant. The constantly recurring expressions—*thy Maker, thy Creator, thy Caller, thy Redeemer*—are with the greatest probability to be referred to the exodus from Egypt. The historical situation is clearly that of actual Israel. *Go ye forth from Babylon, flee ye from the Chaldeans—say ye, the Lord hath redeemed his*

¹ Is. xli. 8, 9.

² Skinner calls it "a sentence which might have been written by our prophet," p. xxxi. The fact is that it very likely was. At any rate we must confess that there are many difficulties in assigning the passage in question to Jeremiah. Cf. Giesebrecht, pp. 160, 162.

³ Ez. xxxvi. 25.

*servant Jacob.*¹ And the spiritual condition of the Servant is that of actual Israel. *Who is blind but my servant . . . and deaf as the Lord's servant?*²

But if the Servant of Jehovah is Israel—the actual, historical nation—it is yet Israel, viewed in a particular light. The word “servant” implies a special relation to Jehovah. It is applied to Jacob, to Moses, to Job, to David (both literally and metaphorically David = Messiah), that is, to those persons who were distinguished as being brought into an unusually close contact with God. Thus, as applied to Israel, it means Israel regarded as a people standing in a peculiar relation to God. What this relation was, is accurately defined. Israel is raised up to *witness* for God, for the truth of her religion.

So outside the actual Servant-passages we have the word *servant* applied to Israel as a nation; the reference being to the actual historical nation, especially in its religious aspect.

It is natural, then, to conclude that the phrase “Servant of Jehovah” has a similar meaning in the other passages also; and this certainly seems to have been the oldest view. For this is the reading of LXX in xlii. 1 :

Ἰακώβ ὁ παῖς μου, ἀντιλήμψομαι αὐτοῦ

Ἰσραήλ ὁ ἐκλεκτός μου, προσέδέξατο αὐτὸν ἡ ψυχὴ μου.

This explanation of the title is no doubt to be regarded as an interpretative intrusion, but it is of

¹ Is. xlviii. 20.

² Is. xlii. 19. We should obviously read “deaf” for “blind” in the last clause; it is demanded by the parallelism, and is also found in some MSS.

great exegetical importance as showing the sense in which the phrase was understood in very early days. Again, in the present text of xlix. 3, we read :

*And he said unto me—Thou art my servant
(Thou art) Israel in whom I will be glorified.*

The word *Israel* here may very likely be a later insertion (but it is yet found in LXX), and should therefore be regarded as an explanatory gloss. But even so it is of value for the same reason as the addition of the LXX noted above.

We may, then, conclude that the Servant of Jehovah is identified with the actual historical nation viewed primarily in its religious capacity.

(iv.) But as soon as we have reached this conclusion, we seem compelled to abandon it. For if in some places the Servant is identified with Israel, he appears in other places to be sharply distinguished from it. Thus the Lord hath given him to be not only a *light of the Gentiles*, but also for a *covenant of the people* (i.e. the Jewish people) *to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prisons, and them that sit in darkness out of the prison house.*¹ His first duty, in fact, appears to lie in the restoration of Israel. This is brought out yet more clearly in xlix. 5. *And now saith the Lord that formed me from the womb to be his servant, to bring Jacob unto him, and that Israel be not swept away.* And in the same chapter part of the Servant's work is distinctly recognized as *being to raise up the tribes of Jacob and to restore the preserved of Israel*, while the *covenant of the people* is defined and expanded as

¹ Is. xlii. 6, 7.

follows: *That thou mayest say to the prisoners, Go forth; to them that are in darkness, show yourselves.*¹

The Servant cannot, therefore, be the historical nation, since he is distinguished from it—and the distinction is so great that there can be little doubt that chap. liii. should be read as the penitent confession of his own countrymen.

(v.) How, then, are we to reconcile these apparent divergences? The Servant is, and yet is not, Israel. Some have sought the explanation in St. Paul's argument that *an Israelite* should mean something more than the accident of physical descent: that, in fact, *he is not a Jew which is one outwardly*,² and that here it is the spiritual kernel of the nation which really answers to, and strives to realize, the Divine idea of Israel that is portrayed and personified by the prophet. It has been pointed out that it must have been on these innocent worshippers of Jehovah that fell most keenly the sufferings and miseries of the exile brought upon the nation by their guilty countrymen; and further that their efforts to preserve the principles and practice of their religion in a strange land exposed them to the contemptuous ridicule of their apostatizing compatriots. It is further suggested that the figure of their sufferings was borrowed from the actual persecution of some devout prophet, possibly Jeremiah.

Now, that this view contains large elements of the truth is not to be denied. But when we transfer our gaze from Jeremiah to Ezekiel, who is really the truer representative of the "B'nê-Haggolah," we cannot but doubt whether there was such a distinction

¹ Is. xlix. 5, 6, 8, 9.

² Rom. ii. 28.

between the prophetic party and their contemporaries as will account for the strong language of chap. liii., which implies that they might be recognized by their outward circumstances as special objects of God's wrath. Moreover, the figure of death and resurrection as applied to this godly party within Israel would, to say the least, be unduly hyperbolical, while it must be confessed that, after all, the spiritual Israel and the actual Israel are so distinct as to suggest the reopening of the question which we have already discussed under section (i.). Failing, however, any more consistent interpretation, this would provide the most suitable explanation of the Servant-passages. But there is yet one more possibility.

(vi.) The Servant of Jehovah is in a very real sense Israel, and yet he is sharply distinguished from Israel, while it is in the spiritual Israel that the conception of the Servant finds its partial embodiment. We are thus led to see that the Servant is not so much any actual person as an ideal personification. It represents Israel according to the Divine idea, Israel so far as she fulfils the purpose for which God called her and formed her, created her and redeemed her. Now this ideal has never been wholly realized, but history has not been destitute of certain approximations to its fulfilment. And wherever there has been such an approximation, it is always through the spiritual part of the nation that it found effect. The mass of the people were nothing but a hindrance to its accomplishment. This explains how the Servant can simultaneously be identified with and distinguished from the actual Israel, and finds a parallel

in the way our Saviour described the Kingdom of God at one time in the terms of its present imperfections, at another of its ideal representation or future glorification. So the prophet here, when dealing with the Divine idea of Israel, naturally describes the ideal in terms borrowed from the actual nation. The ideal—Israel after God's heart—has had a historical experience; it is even involved in the fortunes of the whole people; it has, in fact, a double existence—it has been present in the mind of God from the first: it also exists *in the world*, yet *is not of the world*; and hence it may be described in terms now of the ideal, now of the actual. This view is being adopted by an increasing number of commentators, as it alone enables us to combine in a harmonious whole the different aspects of the Servant and his work that confront us throughout these chapters.

1. The Servant is identified with the actual nation, as it was called by God to fulfil His high purposes in the earth. It has thus had a historical past, as it will also have a historical future.
2. The Servant is distinguished from the actual nation, in so far as the actual nation has failed to realize and respond to the Divine ideal.
3. The Servant corresponds most closely to that Israel within Israel which was alive to the significance of the national history, and sought to carry out God's purposes.
4. The Servant's sufferings and persecutions may have been very likely suggested by the fate

of Jeremiah,¹ or any other saint or prophet unknown to us, whose name is written in the Book of Life.

5. The delineation of this ideal Israel may justly be regarded as a prophecy—for the ideal had never been fulfilled. The writer was thus led to project its final realization into the future. And since all Israel—in its calling and history—is a type of our Lord, we may regard these passages also as prophecies of Him in whom all that God intended Israel to be to Himself and to mankind were summed up and completely realized.

We are reminded, and we need the caution, that “the Servant is not a collective personified but a conception incarnated.”² Bearing this in mind, we shall not be careful to press for a literal application in every instance.

But we must not omit to mention three other views which are based upon the extraordinary degree to which the personification is carried by our prophet. First we may notice that of Delitzsch :

“The idea of the Servant of Jehovah, to speak figuratively, is a pyramid. The lowermost basis is the whole of Israel ; the middle section, Israel, not merely after the flesh, but after the Spirit ; the summit is the person of the Mediator of Salvation, arising out of Israel. This Mediator is

¹ It has occurred to the present writer that if this chapter (liii.) were early applied to Jeremiah, we should have a clue to his expected reappearance. Mt. xvi. 14.

² Davidson, *O. T. Prophecy*, 465.

- (1) in the circle of the kingdom of promise—the second David ;
- (2) in the circle of the people of salvation—the second Israel ;
- (3) in the circle of humanity—the second Adam.”¹

The latter part of this passage concerning the person of the Mediator, must strike every candid reader as fanciful. But his other theory is really no less far-fetched. It is *very* much “to speak figuratively.” The kind of telescopic arrangement by which the prophet is made to expand and contract his conceptions is so artificial that we may pass on to the next view. This is put forward by Duhm,² who supposes that the Servant-passages describe the life and character of one who is “not exactly a prophet, but a disciple of the prophetic school, a teacher of the Torah, and as such regarded by the author of the book Malachi (ii. 5) as embodying the Levitical ideal.”³ He finds support for his view in three circumstances :

- (a) The passages appear to refer to an actual person then living, with whom the prophet was acquainted.

This would, however, be equally satisfied if the prophet had the actual nation in his mind.

- (b) The strongly individual character of the personification.

¹ Delitzsch, *Commentary on Isaiah*, vol. ii. p. 165.

² In his *Theologie* he takes the view that we have accepted. “Verstehen wir also unter dem Knechte Jahves *das Ideale Israel* das Gottes Wort hat und demnach den Verkehr Gottes mit Israel und indirekt mit der ganzen Welt vermittelt.” This was published in 1875, the second edition of the *Commentary* in 1901.

³ Duhm, *Hand Kommentar, Jesaias*, 277.

But this is surely little more than what is admittedly applied to Israel in this connection, *e.g.* *I have formed thee in the womb.*

- (c) The fact that the passages are written by another author than that of the rest of the book—in which case, of course, *the Servant* might be used in a sense different from that which is used elsewhere.

Now this contention of Duhm's, which appears to be accepted by Dillmann, opens up a critical question of almost boundless extent into which the limits of our space make it impossible to enter.

We will confine ourselves to three points :

- (1) The theory involves the arbitrary excision of all the "Servant-passages" because it *assumes* that they represent a completely different conception as to the Servant's character and work. But we have shown that there is no necessity to postulate any such divergence. If the Servant is interpreted as the "ideal Israel," the Servant-passages and the other places in the book where the Servant is mentioned are brought into complete harmony, and thus a strong argument is established for identity of authorship in both cases.
- (2) It is stated that the Servant-passages could be removed from their context without their being missed. But a method so simple and so effective might be applied to almost any doctrine or expectation of the prophets. If every reference to a particular set of views

is carefully eliminated, there is not much danger of their being "missed." Such an argument is practically without value.¹

- (3) Those who view the passages as interpolations, have yet to explain their insertion in their present detached form. The difficulties in this connection are so acutely felt that Duhm and Dillmann suppose that they were placed in their present position by Deutero-Isaiah, who was moreover profoundly influenced by the ideas they contained, and while working over the Servant-passages in his own style, and from his own point of view, also brought his own views elsewhere expressed more into general harmony with the ideas underlying the passages which he had accepted from the anonymous author and had incorporated into suitable portions of his book. But if so, why might not Deutero-Isaiah have composed the pieces himself?

A theory so complicated with subtle refinements may be regarded as a masterpiece of critical acumen, but will not commend itself to those who prefer a simple, straightforward explanation to one burdened with so many fanciful improbabilities. We may therefore dismiss the evidence which Duhm seeks to derive from critical grounds for the difference of authorship—and his theory that the passages refer to a definite individual must be examined on its own

¹ For a good instance of its *reductio ad absurdum* see Volz, *Die vorexilische Jahwe-prophetie*, where every passage contradicting the author's view as to the Messianic hope "ist unecht," "ist fraglich," "ist zweifelhaft," "ist zweifellos spät," "ist wohl auszuschneiden."

merits. These are considerable : the theory gives to the text a plain meaning : it accounts for the vivid personification : it involves no spiritualizing or allegorizing exegesis. But it must encounter insurmountable difficulties. Leaving out of sight for the moment the fact that *the Servant of Jehovah* would thus acquire two radically different meanings, which we have seen to be in the highest degree improbable, we should have to explain the extraordinary silence of all contemporary literature on the subject of one who appears to have exercised so wide and so deep an influence. If, too, he was himself a "Thoralehrer," it is all the more remarkable that none of his own words were committed to writing, either by himself or any of his disciples. Nor does there appear anywhere else in the Old Testament the idea of an individual being a light of the Gentiles, while the idea of a resurrection¹ which seems involved in liii. 10-12 seems to be in contradiction with what we have already seen to be the characteristic view of religious thought at this period.

We now turn to the third interpretation which sees in the *Servant of the Lord* none other than the Messiah. This view has always been able to secure a number of advocates—but it can hardly be maintained that it was intended in the *first* instance. It has sometimes been supposed that, while the author had in his mind an actual historical personage, yet it was Deutero-Isaiah's intention in incorporating these poems into his book to present to his readers his conception of Messiah's

¹ It can hardly be understood as "geistlich Fortleben in seinen Jungern." Dillmann, *Jesaias*, 461.

true character. As the book progressed, the personification became a personality, and the earliest readers "saw in him the fulfiller of the Messianic task of the people, *i.e.* none other than the Messiah himself."¹

But this view postulates that difference of authorship which we are not disposed to grant, and even so the question is not answered—Of whom spake the (original) prophet this? Some, however, despite the significance which, as we have seen, must be attached to the idea of *the Servant* in other parts of the book, persist in interpreting these particular passages of the Messiah. Against this view there are two conclusive arguments.

In the first place, the Servant is spoken of as having a present existence and a past experience. Never once does the language assume a predictive character when alluding to his character, mission, activity, sufferings, and death. It is only when his subsequent exaltation is described, that the prophet looks forward to the future for the fulfilment of his prophecies. And it must be borne in mind that this exaltation is not isolated from his past history: it stands in the closest possible connection with his bitter humiliation. In fact, it is but the last act in a drama which is being visibly enacted before the eyes of Israel and the world. The first part had opened with the promise of a bright career, the second had closed with the deepest tragedy: the last which was yet to come would witness the most complete triumph.

Secondly, there is a grave chronological difficulty.

¹ Dillmann, *ibid.* 460.

There is really no room for the work of the Servant, if viewed in the light of a future individual, between the prophet's own historical standpoint, and the return from Babylon to which he looks forward as *the restoration of all things*.

Now it is so generally recognized that the Servant-passages cannot originally have been intended to portray the Messiah, that those critics who think that such is the prophet's intention in placing these prophecies among his own writings, are driven to postulate a wholly hypothetical personage to whom the words were first applied. But it will be generally recognized that the less we have to do with these imaginary creations the sounder will be our exegesis of the passage in question.

Now all these three views which we have been discussing insist upon an individual reference because of the very remarkable extent to which the personification of the Servant is carried. But it is a very hazardous task to set any limits to the possibilities of Old Testament personification. There are times when the distinction between personification and personality is practically lost sight of altogether. A good instance of this is to be found in Isaiah's rebuke of Assyria,¹ but nowhere is this personification carried out with greater consistency and vividness than in our prophet. Israel has been *formed from the womb*,² nay, she has been *carried from the womb, and even to hoar hairs will I carry you*.³ Babylon the daughter of the Chaldeans is a luxurious lady, *given to pleasures*,

¹ Is. x.² xlv. I.³ xlv. 3-4.

dwelling carelessly. She is suddenly afflicted with two things in a moment, in one day—the *loss of children and widowhood.* She shall no more be called *tender and delicate*, but will have to perform the most menial occupations of slavery.¹ Zion on the other hand, a desolate widow *childless and unfruitful*, becomes a *joyful mother of children.*² We cannot, therefore, be surprised at a similar personification of the ideal Israel.

There is yet one more point which must be noted. If an individual is here intended, how is it that he never re-appears in the prophetic delineations of the future glory of Zion? In these the Servant of the Lord disappears, and his place is taken by the whole community. Even the sons of the stranger that join themselves to the Lord become *his servants.*³ If the Servant is an individual, this omission is unaccountable. "But if he be an ideal Being, it is natural. This Being loses his existence when the antithesis between him and the actual Israel ceases: he dissolves in the actual Israel, now, in each of its members, a servant of the Lord."⁴

We are now in a position to answer the question which we proposed to ourselves at the outset of this enquiry. *Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or of another?* Certainly not of himself, we answer, and therefore *of another.* But that other of whom the prophet spoke was no living individual, but rather the Divine ideal of all that Israel was and could be by the grace of God.

¹ Is. xlvii.

² xlix. 14-22.

³ lvi. 6.

⁴ Davidson, 439. למורי יחיה, liv. 17, lxv. 8, lxvi. 14. עבדי יחיה, liv. 13.

Having thus settled the question as to the personality of the Servant, let us now learn what is said as to the Servant's character, his work, his endowment for the work, his fate, his final triumph.

The Servant is a character after God's heart. *Behold my servant whom I uphold, my chosen in whom my soul delighteth.*¹ We are told of the quiet and unobtrusive behaviour by which he is characterized. *He shall not cry nor lift up his voice, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street.*² We see him conscious of his Divine election. *The Lord hath called me from the womb; from the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name . . . and said unto me, Thou art my servant (O Israel), in whom I will be glorified.*³ We note his gentleness to the weak and despondent. *A bruised reed shall he not break, and the dimly burning wick shall he not quench.*⁴ He knows how to sustain the weary with a word.⁵ He himself tells us of his close and intimate communion with God. *He wakeneth morning by morning, he wakeneth mine ear to hear as they that are taught (i.e. as a disciple). The Lord God hath opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious neither turned away back.*⁶ Strong in this faith, he bears persecution with patience *as seeing him who is invisible. I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting.*⁷ *Though oppressed, yet he humbled himself and opened not his mouth; as a lamb that is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep that before her shearers is dumb.*⁸ He knows that he is honour-

¹ Is. xlii. 1.² xlii. 2.³ xlix. 1-3.⁴ lxii. 3.⁵ l. 4.⁶ l. 4, 5.⁷ l. 3.⁸ liii. 7.

able in the eyes of the Lord and that his God is become his strength.¹ And it is this which gives him courage to endure to the end. *He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he shall have set judgement in the earth.*² When he says *I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought*, he recollects the fact that *surely my judgement is with the Lord and my recompense with my God*³—and confident in his assurance that the Lord God will help him he can say, *I have set my face like a flint and I know that I shall not be ashamed.*⁴ Lastly, we must notice his perfect innocence—*He did no violence neither was deceit in his mouth.*⁵

The Servant's work is conceived as of a definitely prophetic nature. *He hath made my mouth like a sharp sword.*⁶ His task is *to set judgement in the earth—and to make the isles wait for his instruction.*⁷ *The Lord God hath given me*, he declares, *the tongue of them that are taught that I should know how to sustain the weary with a word.*⁸ He calls upon distant nations to listen to him—*Listen, O ye isles, unto me; and hearken ye people from afar;*⁹ and Deutero-Isaiah calls on his readers to follow his prophetic teaching. *Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light? Let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.*

Now in this prophetic office the Servant has a double task to perform. The first is with regard to his own nation. *I will give thee for a covenant*

¹ Is. xlix. 5.² xlii. 4.³ xlix. 4.⁴ l. 7.⁵ liii. 9.⁶ xlix. 2.⁷ xlii. 4.⁸ l. 4.⁹ xlix. i.

of the people . . . to open the blind eyes, to bring out the prisoners from the prison¹—to restore the land, to cause to inherit the desolate heritages.² It was for us that he suffered as he did.³ He was stricken for the transgression of my people.⁴ It was his first and lightest duty that he should raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel, to bring Jacob again to him and that Israel be not swept away.⁵

But this national restoration—conceived from both a spiritual and a political standpoint—was only the prelude to a more universal mission. The sight of Israel re-united, forgiven, restored, would have a powerful effect on the heathen world. They would begin to recognize the truth of Israel's religion and the unity of Israel's God. And so *it is too light a thing*, said Jehovah to him, *that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob. I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that my salvation may be unto the ends of the earth.⁶ And so it is in the earth*, and not in Israel only *that he will set judgement*, and *it is the isles that shall wait for his instruction.⁷* Here, then, we have the transition from a national to a universal religion, and the Servant becomes the Mediator of salvation to the whole human race.

A calling so high demands a unique endowment. And what this is, we are told as soon as we are introduced to the Servant at all. *Behold my servant whom I uphold, my chosen in whom my soul delighteth—I have put my spirit upon him.⁸* The Servant is thus

¹ Is. xlii. 6, 7.

² xlix. 8.

³ liii. 4, 5.

⁴ liii. 8.

⁵ xlix. 5, 6.

⁶ xlix. 6.

⁷ xlii. 4.

⁸ xlii. 1.

fitted for his ministry by the gift of Jehovah's Spirit, just as the plenitude of the same Spirit rests upon the Messianic king to enable him to fulfil the tasks of his exalted office. The gift of the Spirit, in itself, suggests that the recipient is to be regarded as a prophet; and this is borne out not only by xlix. 2, which alludes to prophetic eloquence, but also by the words of l. 4, where the Spirit disciplines tongue and ear to hear and speak as becomes a true disciple of Jehovah.

But the Servant's undertaking is not to be crowned with immediate success. There is much to make him *fail and be discouraged*.¹ He feels at times that he has *laboured in vain and spent his strength for nought and in vain*.²

From the heathen he receives nothing but contempt. He is one *that is heartily despised, that is abhorred of people, a servant of tyrants*.³ Many nations are *astonied* at him. To them he appears as though disfigured by a loathsome disease—so marred is his aspect, from that of man and his form from that of the sons of men.⁴

Even his own nation treated him no better. *He had no form or comeliness, and when we saw him there was no beauty that we should desire him: he was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as one from whom men hide their face, he was despised and we esteemed him not*.⁵ We even hear of *smiters* and *those that plucked off the hair*; we hear of *shame and spitting*.⁶ He was *stricken, smitten*

¹ Is. xlii. 3.

² xlix. 4.

³ xlix. 7.

⁴ lli. 14.

⁵ lli. 2, 3.

⁶ l. 6.

*of God, and afflicted. He was wounded and bruised. He was chastised and scourged.*¹ By an oppressive judgement² he was taken away to die, and no one troubled to think of him any more. He received an ignominious burial with the criminals, though he had himself been perfectly innocent³ of any offence.

The unparalleled sufferings of the Servant could not fail to attract attention. They were bound to ask themselves the meaning of such untold misery. At first they came to the conclusion that he was reaping the just reward of his sins. But when they reflected on his sinless character⁴ and also noticed his unexampled patience and submission,⁵ they realized that it could not be his own sins which he was expiating. What then could be the meaning of his suffering? They felt more and more that it was the suffering which had also fallen upon them and which they knew that they had richly deserved. *Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief. Surely it was our griefs that he hath borne and our sorrows that he hath carried.*⁶

Now it was the Lord whom it had pleased to bruise him, but the Servant willingly took on himself the suffering of his nation. *He was not rebellious, neither turned he away backward. He gave his back to the smiters and his cheeks to them that plucked off the hair, he did not hide his face from shame and spitting.*⁷ *Though oppressed, he humbled himself and*

¹ Is. liii. 4, 5.

² This seems the best explanation of the difficult phrase מַעַר וּמִשְׁשָׁה.

³ Is. liii. 8, 9. See additional note.

Is. liii. 9, 16. ⁵ liii. 7. ⁶ liii. 4. ⁷ 1. 6.

*opened not his mouth.*¹ The essence of the suffering of the Servant lies in the fact that he recognized and accepted as just the Divine punishment for sin, and that he willingly bore the consequences of their evil-doing in his own person even to the bitter end. The suffering is therefore not only representative but vicarious ; not only vicarious but substitutionary. It has an atoning value. And it has a moral value, which rescues it from all those charges of injustice and capriciousness and arbitrariness so continually brought against any theory of substitution. His countrymen, reflecting on his beautiful character and tragic end, begin to realize their own selfish waywardness. *All we like sheep have gone astray ; we have turned every one to his own way ; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.*² Their thoughts induce repentance ; and this finds expression in the penitent confession which forms the bulk of this wonderful chapter. The sufferings of the Servant have thus issued in their Divinely-intended consequence. The national repentance is the prelude to the national forgiveness. Looking back over the past, faithful Israelites can see the meaning of the Servant's history. They recognize him to be the sinless Servant of the Lord, and in his sufferings they know that their own redemption has been potentially accomplished.

*He was pierced because of our rebellions
Crushed because of our iniquities.
The chastisement of our peace was upon him,
And with his stripes we are healed.*³

¹ Is. liii. 7.² liii. 6.³ liii. 5.

No less strong is Jehovah's appreciation of his Servant's work :

*He hath poured out his soul unto death,
And he was numbered with the transgressors,
And he bare the sin of many,
And he made intercession for the transgressors.*¹

His death, therefore, is not merely a martyr's death, it is a guilt-offering for sin,² by which forgiveness is mediated to all those who express their sorrow by a sincere repentance. Once more, however, let us express our conviction that the key to the understanding of the whole passage is to be found in the consciously voluntary character of the Servant's suffering and death—an idea which is brought out in the magnificent mistranslation of the Vulgate—*Oblatus est quia ipse voluit*.³ It was his own free concurrence in the Will of God that made it possible for men to regard his death as a true sacrifice for sin.

The Servant then has died—his corpse has been flung into a dishonoured grave, but the most astounding part is yet to follow. The depth of his abasement is the measure of the height of his subsequent exaltation. The Servant himself had felt confident that God would not leave him alone. *He is near that justifieth me. Who will contend with me? Who is mine adversary? Behold the Lord God will help me; who is he that shall condemn me?*⁴ For

¹ Is. liii. 12. ² liii. 10.

³ Reading *voluit* for *voluit*, but even so, the rendering is more than dubious.

⁴ Is. i. 8, 9.

aforetime the Lord had told him, *Kings shall see and arise, princes also shall do homage, because of the Lord that is faithful, the Holy One of Israel that hath chosen thee.*¹ And thus before the account of his life of persecution, and his martyr's death, Jehovah himself speaks: *Behold my servant shall prosper. He shall be high and lifted up, and be very high. As many were astonished at him . . . so will he startle many nations, and kings shall shut their mouths because of him: for that which had not been told them shall they see, and that which they had not heard shall they consider.*² And now when all is over, Jehovah speaks again. *He shall see a seed, he shall prolong his days, and the good purpose of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.*³ Although his resurrection is not actually mentioned, it is necessarily implied in these words. God works through him whom he has smitten grievously,⁴ and whom the people put to a shameful death, and the language is really incompatible with the idea of merely spiritual activity.⁵ We may therefore assert with confidence that the Servant is spoken of as dying, and rising again from the dead. But his resurrection is not conceived as being only God's reversal of man's sentence, but as inaugurating the resumption of his ministry, and the carrying of it to a complete and triumphant conclusion. *By his knowledge, i.e. by the knowledge of Jehovah which he himself as a faithful priest possesses, and, as a faithful prophet, preaches to others, shall my righteous servant make the many*

¹ Is. xlix. 7.² lli. 13-15.³ llii. 10, 11.⁴ llii. 10.⁵ Cf. Gen. i. 23.

*righteous.*¹ He, too, shall have an empire as wide, as great as that of any earthly king—an empire not won by fire and sword, but by patient suffering and spiritual influence and sacrifice of self. *Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong, because he hath poured out his soul unto death.*²

The picture is so complete that we may well feel that nothing can be added to it. But it receives further amplification in some of the Psalms which appear to deal with the same ideas and the same historical situation, and which in fact can hardly be considered independent of the Servant-passages which we have just considered.³

In Ps. xxii. we again meet with the persecuted Servant. The language is almost identical with that employed by the prophet to describe the Lord's Servant.

<i>I am a worm,</i>	-	cf. Is. xli. 14.	
<i>And no man,</i>	-	„	lii. 14.
<i>A reproach of men,</i>	„	li. 7	} liii. 2, 3.
<i>And despised of people,</i> ⁴	„	xlix. 7	

He is surrounded by bitter enemies. *They gape with their lips, they shake the head, saying, Trust to Jehovah, let him deliver him; let him*

¹ Is. liii. 11.

² liii. 12.

³ The speaker in Ps. xxii. is not an individual—cf. *Our fathers* in 5, and *the afflicted one* of 25 is replaced by *the afflicted ones* of 27. Again why should all Israel praise God for the deliverance of the Psalmist? and speaking generally it is difficult to associate this deliverance of an individual with the universal conversion that follows. On the other hand, the Psalmist distinguishes himself from other Israelites in 23.

⁴ Ps. xxii. 6.

*deliver him, for he delighteth in him.*¹ The bystanders deride him, but cannot shake his confidence in Jehovah's protection. He still feels sure of this. *But thou art he that took me out of the womb, that didst make me trust when I was yet upon my mother's breasts.*² He has lived his life in this trust and in prayer.³ He is brought to the last extremity—*My strength is dried up like a potsherd; and my tongue cleaveth to my jaws, and thou dost bring me into the dust of death* (in it all he recognizes the hand of God). *They pierced my hands and my feet—I may count all my bones. They look and stare upon me.*⁴ It is to this period of darkest distress and misery that we can refer the words with which the Psalm opens. *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?*⁵ Meanwhile his enemies cannot leave him to die in peace. *They part my garments among them, and upon my vesture do they cast lots.*⁶ He turns away from the scene of brutal violence and looks up to heaven,—*But thou, O Lord, be not far from me: O thou my succour, make haste to help me*⁷—and looking up to heaven he sees the glory that is to be revealed. The conviction seizes him that his prayer is answered. *Thou hast answered me.*⁸ These are the closing words of this section of the Psalm, describing the sufferer's persecution and horror.

God has answered him. God will deliver him. And he addresses himself once more to the fulfilment of his prophetic ministry—to the Jews first,

¹ Ps. xxii. 7, 8.

² Ps. xxii. 9.

³ Ps. xxii. 2.

⁴ Ps. xxii. 15, 16, see additional note, p. 319.

⁵ *Ibid.* 1.

⁶ *Ibid.* 18.

⁷ *Ibid.* 19.

⁸ *Ibid.* 21.

then to the Gentiles. *I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee. Ye that fear the Lord, praise him: all ye of the seed of Jacob glorify him: stand in awe of him, all ye seed of Israel.*¹ If the servant was heartily despised and abhorred of people, yet God hath not despised nor abhorred the affliction of his afflicted one.² If men hid as it were their faces from him, yet God hath not hid his face from him,³ and so he cries, *Of thee cometh my praise in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him.*⁴ These vows take the form of a sacrificial feast or thank-offering. But it is not only Israelites that shall be bidden. In full accord with the humane legislation of Deuteronomy,⁵ the servant will invite the poor and needy to partake in this eucharistic feast. *The meek shall eat and be satisfied. They shall praise the Lord that seek after him.*⁶ And now the Psalmist's hope takes an even more universal range, while his vision embraces eternity.

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn unto the Lord.

And all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.

For the kingdom is the Lord's,

And he is the ruler among the nations.

Surely him shall all earth's fat ones worship.

Before him must bow all they that go down to the dust.

But my soul liveth unto him,

My seed shall serve him.

¹ Ps. xxii. 22, 23. ² Is. xlvii. 9; Ps. xxi. 24. ³ Is. liii. 3; Ps. xxi. 24.

⁴ Ps. xxii. 25. ⁵ Dt. xiv. 29, xvi. 11, xxvi. 12.

⁶ A Christian would naturally see "the counterpart and fulfilment" of these words in the Sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving at the Holy Communion.

*It shall be told of the Lord unto the generation that shall come,
And they shall declare his righteousness unto a people that shall be born—
That he hath done it.*¹

Ps. xxxv. also deals with the Servant. We are told of his enemies that *hate him without a cause*;² but again sorrow is swallowed up in triumph, and the Psalmist exhorts all that rejoice in his righteousness to say continually, *Let the Lord be magnified, who hath pleasure in the prosperity of his servant.*³

Now these Psalms are not of the same high religious value as the passages in Isaiah.⁴ Here, it is true, suffering precedes victory, but there suffering leads to victory. In the Psalms the connection is temporal, in the Prophet it is spiritual. In the Psalms one follows the other, in the Prophet one follows from the other. There can be no question as to which is the higher view, but both alike *prepare the way* for the paradox of Christianity—*Via crucis via lucis*.

There are two further points to be noticed. First, we will take two definitions of the prophet's work, the one expressing the negative, the other the positive effect. Isaiah, called to be God's prophet—to go for us—is bidden to *tell this people*.

*Hear ye indeed but understand not,
And see ye indeed but perceive not;*

¹ Ps. xxii. 22-31. For the readings adopted, see additional note.

² Ps. xxxv. 19.

³ Ps. xxxv. 27.

⁴ But yet how different to the Psalms of the victorious Conqueror. Here—*All the ends of the earth shall remember themselves and turn unto the Lord.* There—*I will give thee the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession. Thou shalt bruise them with a rod of iron.*

*Make the heart of this people fat,
And make their ears heavy
And shut their eyes,
Lest they see with their eyes,
And hear with their ears
And understand with their hearts,
And turn again and be healed.*¹

Isaiah, reviewing the repeated failures of his prophetic activity, is led by his sad experience to formulate in these terrible terms his commission to the ministry. Now, if we would understand the meaning of this passage, we must bear in mind that the Hebrews took no account of secondary causes. If a result was inevitable, it was so because God willed it to be so—and thus He might be said to have brought it about. Now, Isaiah here enunciates one of the greatest laws of the spiritual world. The revelation of truth necessarily involves awful responsibilities for those who receive it. For truth, once rejected, becomes all the harder to accept. And so the more frequent the revelation, the more hopeless the condition of those who, having once refused to accept it, are driven to an impenitent obduracy. This solemn truth was to receive a yet more terrible illustration when *this people* declined to hear the message of one greater than Isaiah.

The second definition is found in the writings of the Second Isaiah.

*The spirit of the Lord is upon me
Because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings
unto the meek.
He hath sent me* (Isaiah also was *sent* but with how different a message)

¹Is. vi. 9, 10.

*To bind up the broken-hearted.
 To proclaim liberty to the captives,
 And the opening of the prison to the bound.
 To proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord, and—*

(we can hardly bring ourselves to write this next verse—introducing a thought to our mind so immeasurably inferior to that which has preceded—and yet the mere fact that even the loftiest prophecy is scarcely able to shake off such conceptions is perhaps the best indication of what it actually was enabled to accomplish)—

*The day of vengeance of our God.
 To comfort all that mourn.*

This beautiful definition of the prophet's work shows how deeply the writer has been influenced by the conception of *the Servant* in the earlier chapters. We miss the universalism of the Servant-passages; but the Gospel that the prophet will preach is so perfectly human and yet divine that it must have soon been realized how far it exceeded the possibilities of any prophetic ministry, and the words must have remained a beautiful and unattainable ideal until One came who declared, *To-day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.*

We must now glance at the second point that deserves our consideration. We have seen that the theocratic expectation did not so much centre round the figure of a single prophet, as round a nation of prophets. For the ideal was that all should be brought into such close spiritual relation with Jehovah that prophecy would no longer be necessary, or rather that all should be prophets, from the greatest of them to the least of them. But

this was not as yet ; and the existence of a prophet at every stage of national life was, as Moses had foretold, a pledge of the continuance of Jehovah's favour and nearness to Israel. We know how Samuel was regarded as the deliverer from a state of things in which *vision was scarce in Israel*, and how the prophets themselves dreaded the approaching time of prophetic inactivity.¹ When the voice of prophecy was finally hushed, we see from the first book of Maccabees that its cessation was regarded as one of the most calamitous characteristics of the period. The Psalmist complains that *there is no prophet any more*.² And the historian of the Maccabean age tells us that *there was great affliction in Israel, such as there was not since the day that a prophet was not seen among them*.³ But, as was to be expected, intense regret passed into an equally intense longing—and so even in their public actions men were careful to claim validity for their legislation only *until a faithful prophet should arise*.⁴

The prediction of a prophet to come forms the subject of the last two verses of the Old Testament.

Behold I will send you Elijah the prophet before the great and terrible day of the Lord come. And

¹ Ez. vii. 26.

² Ps. lxxiv. 9.

³ 1 Macc. ix. 27 ; cf. Dan. iii. 38, LXX.

⁴ 1 Macc. xiv. 41, iv. 46.

It may be due to the prevalence of this feeling that the Targum and Vulgate rendered Joel ii. 23 “*Quia dedit vobis doctorem justitiae*.” Of course, מִקְרָה often has this sense, but the context makes it perfectly impossible to attach such a meaning to the word as here used. Cf. also Ps. lxxxiv. 6, LXX, and Jerome.

he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the earth with a curse. With regard to this prophecy, we may note that the re-appearance of Elijah the prophet is an eschatological conception; that he is brought into the closest connection with the coming of Jehovah; that his office as a prophet is not predictive but moral; and, finally, that the ideal of prophecy is not fulfilled by his personal reappearance, but by the universal reformation which he will effect, thereby making the whole nation worthy to be the prophetic servants of Jehovah.

Let us now set down in order the chief ideas of the Old Testament concerning the part that prophecy should play in the Messianic age:

(1) The people were taught to expect the continuous revelation of God through prophetic agency. They treasured the belief that there would never be a time when they should be without the living voice of prophecy in their midst; and when their historical experience belied this expectation, they continued to look forward to the time when a faithful prophet should arise.

(2) To appreciate this belief at its right value we must notice what sense they attached to the idea of a prophet:

(a) The prophet may be said to have been the incarnation of the idea of the covenant. His was the most close and confidential relation to God.

(β) His main function was of a moral rather than a predictive character—to denounce the wicked and comfort the weak-hearted.

(γ) His endowment for the task assigned to him was “the spirit of Jehovah.”

(δ) He could therefore speak *as one having authority* since he was really the mouthpiece of God.

(3) Perhaps, however, the most characteristic idea of Hebrew prophecy was the anticipation that finally all should be prophets.

(4) But it was seen that to effect this ideal some kind of mediation was needed. Israel was accordingly idealized and personified, and as the Servant of the Lord accomplished the task that was set before him.

We are thus led to an examination of the main religious lessons to be drawn from the representation of the Servant's character and life and work:

- i. The Servant is conscious of having been elected, and destined, as he is also guided and upheld, by God for his task.
- ii. His character is most lofty. In him Jehovah finds pleasure: he is kind and sympathetic to the weak: he endures suffering with noble fortitude and marvellous self-control: *he did no guile, neither was deceit found in his mouth*: nothing can shake his constancy, or his devotion to his work, even unto death.
- iii. He has a twofold mission:

First. To restore and re-unite the scattered members of his own people.

Second. To instruct even the most distant nations in the knowledge of true religion.

- iv. In the prosecution of his work he has to endure endless discouragement and disappointment, and that mainly from his own countrymen. His sufferings are described at much length. He is scourged, insulted, spat upon, judicially condemned to die by a mock trial, his hands and his feet are pierced, he becomes an object of universal loathing and derision, he is wounded, bruised, crushed, smitten, *numbered with the transgressors*, and finally killed—while his murderers part his garment and cast lots upon his vesture, and then flung him into a dishonoured grave.
- v. In all this he bears himself calmly and bravely. At one time he almost feels as if God has forsaken him, but he puts the thought away from him. He willingly takes on himself the sins of the people and gives himself to be a sacrifice for sin. He even makes intercession for the transgressors among whom he was numbered.
- vi. The result of this atoning sacrifice is the repentance and forgiveness of his people.
- vii. But he himself is raised from the dead,
- viii. And resumes his prophetic career,
- ix. Which is crowned with complete success : the many are made righteous by the knowledge of the righteous Servant. A generation that shall come and a people yet unborn shall hear of the righteous acts of Jehovah, and

all the ends of the world shall remember themselves and turn unto the Lord.

- x. And he himself will be *highly exalted*, above kings and princes, *and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.*

Such is the picture set before us. *Of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself or of another?* We have seen reasons for supposing that he intends to describe the ideal Israel, Israel such as God meant it to be, Israel actually fulfilling God's purpose in the earth. But Israel never rose even to a proper conception of its calling and responsibilities. This may be gathered from the remarkably small effect that these passages, so rich in the deepest spiritual lessons, seem to have had on subsequent literature. Israel then never even approached the ideal thus held before its view. It was left for an individual in whom all that was good and true in Israel found its perfect embodiment to prove to the world that the prophet's hopes were not mere idle dreams, but deep, eternal realities. To the recognition of this fact we must doubtless attribute the fact that the Targum attributes this passage to the Messiah. Now the identification of the suffering Servant with the royal Messiah is often put down to the necessity imposed upon an allegorical exegesis to reconcile obvious discrepancies in the interests of the Christian religion. But, as we have seen, it is not confined to Christian scholars. "Even if this manner of exposition never obtained universally or officially among the Jews, yet from the days of the composition of the Talmud to the present times voices have been raised with sufficient clearness, in Israel's midst, speaking of a suffering

Messiah as a legitimate deduction from the words of this prophecy.”¹ The evidence of the Targum is especially noteworthy. The mere fact that it applies the passage to Messiah, though it is obliged by its own premises to eliminate all idea of suffering by a series of ridiculous artifices, is a noteworthy indication of the antiquity of this interpretation. For, though we have no evidence of its early prevalence, we may feel pretty sure that it would never have found its way into the teaching of the post-Christian synagogue had not it been rooted in the doctrine of pre-Christian Judaism.

Of whom spake the prophet this? of himself or of another? Once more we say “not of himself.” He spake of an ideal—which was never fulfilled save in that Other, *who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down on the right hand of the majesty on high.*

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON VARIOUS READINGS IN ISAIAH LIII. AND PSALM XXII.

The text is in many parts very corrupt, and to find an adequate sense recourse must be had to emendation with such help as can be derived from the ancient versions.

We will take the chief passages in the order in which they occur :

Is. liii. 8, מִפֶּשַׁע עַמִּי נָגַע לָמִי.

LXX, ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνομιῶν τοῦ λαοῦ μου ἤχθη εἰς θάνατον.

Vulg., *Propter scelus populi mei percussit eum.*

לָמִי could only have reference to עַמִּי, and we should have to translate *the stroke due to them, or the stroke for them.*

¹ Dalman, *Der leidende und sterbende Messias*, p. 2.

It seems better to alter the Hebrew in accordance with LXX and read **קָנַע לְמָוֶת**.

9. **רָאֵתָה עֲשִׂיר בְּמִוְתָּיו**.

LXX, τοὺς πλουσίους ἀντὶ τοῦ θανάτου.

Vulg., *divitem pro morte sua*.

This was generally interpreted as a prophecy of Christ's burial by Joseph of Arimathea, but the parallelism of the Hebrew makes it impossible to regard **את עשיר** as antithetical to **את רשעים** despite the support of the versions.

Various emendations are proposed: **עֲשׂוֹק**, which is perhaps not sufficiently general. **עֲשִׂיָּק** = **לַחֲסִים**, oppressor; but this is Aramaic not Hebrew.

We should probably read **עֲשִׂי רַע**.

בְּמִוְתָּיו, the plural, is most peculiar. It seems best to read the singular with the versions. A few MSS. read **בְּמִוְתִּי** or **בְּמִוְתָּיו**, but **בְּמִתָּה** in the sense of a sepulchral mound does not recur. Other suggestions are **בְּרִוְתָּיו** or **בְּתִּמְוָתָיו**.

10. **הִחֲלִי**; LXX, τῆς πλεγειῆς; Vulg., *in infirmitate*.

We must either read **בְּחֲלִי** or regard it as perf. Hiph. **הִחֲלִיא**, or as an Inf. Abs. **הִחֲלִיא**.

תָּשִׂים; LXX, δῶτε; Vulg., *posuerit*.

Much confusion would be avoided if we read with Vulg., **יָשִׂים**.

Ps. xxii. 17, Heb., **בְּאַרִי**; LXX, ὠρυξαν; Vulg., *foderunt*; Syr., **כּוּצ**; Aquila, ἡσχυναν; Jer., *vinxerunt* (corrupted into *finxerunt*, *fixerunt*). All these versions read a **ר** not an **י** at the end. Symmachus is the only exception: ὡς ζητοῦντες δῆσαι, probably = **בְּאַרִי**.

Vinxerunt is attained from an Arabic root.

ἡσχυναν from Syrian **ܚܝܢܐ**, late Hebrew **כָּאֵר**, to be hateful.

ὥρξαν is now admitted to be the most probable rendering from כרה, *i.e.* it assumes פָּאֲרָה as written *plena scriptio* for פָּרָה.

The Hebrew is now universally abandoned.

30-33. The last verses of the Psalm need much correction:
וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ; LXX, ἐφαγον καὶ προσεκύνησαν; Vulg.,
manducaverunt et adoraverunt.

But it is *the poor* that eat and are satisfied; the *fat ones* have enough to eat without further exhortation; and וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ can hardly be taken as a proph. perf.

It is easy to see how the mistake arose, through a confusion with 27.

A much simpler reading would be given by the emendation:
וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ לִי וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ.

וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ לִי וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ.

LXX, καὶ ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἀντὶ ᾧ ζῇ.

Vulg., *Et anima mea illi vivet.* (So also Syr., but Symm. Targ. Jer. וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ.)

If the Hebrew is to be retained we must join the clause on to what follows:

*As for him that could not keep his soul alive
His seed shall serve him.* (So Kirkpatrick.)

But the versions seem to offer a simpler and more satisfactory sense.

We accordingly read with LXX וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ (לִי =) לִי, and in the next line read וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ for וַיִּשְׂתַּחֲוּ.

The final clauses are much improved by the transposition we have adopted.

PART IV,

THE CHURCH AND THE PRIEST.

§ I. THE CHURCH.

THERE can be no doubt that the main evidential value of prophecy lies in its presentation of the universal kingdom ruled by the righteous king, and of the new covenant of complete forgiveness inaugurated by the suffering servant. But there are other ideas less prominent perhaps, and less important, which nevertheless are of no little value for the development of a world-wide and spiritual religion.

Of such ideas the foremost is the conception of the Church as a spiritual body apart from, and independent of, the State. At first Church and State were inseparably connected, or to speak more accurately, the Church was the State, for the two together constituted but a single conception. The nation as organized for political purposes might be called the State, and as organized for religious purposes it might be called the Church. But it is unlikely that even this distinction found any actual recognition. Religion and politics were practically

indistinguishable. But the almost hopeless deterioration of the national religion soon made a separation inevitable. We see an indication of the coming change in the fact that there were seven thousand who refused to bow the knee to Baal. But the first real step towards organizing and consolidating any such community of religious fellowship was taken by Isaiah when, after the rejection of his message by king and people, he bound up the testimony and sealed the instruction among his disciples.¹ This society was based on faith in the truth and power of the Divine revelation. They waited patiently for its fulfilment. *I will wait for the Lord that hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and I will hope in him.* The presence of this little band of disciples was in itself a standing protest against the unbelief of the mass of the nation. *Behold I and the children that the Lord hath given me are for signs and for wonders in Israel from the Lord of hosts which dwelleth in mount Zion.* The significance of Isaiah's act is admirably brought out by W. R. Smith :

"The formation of this little community was a new thing in the history of religion. Till then no one had dreamed of a fellowship of faith dissociated from all national forms, maintained without the exercise of ritual services, bound together by faith in the divine word alone. It was the birth of the conception of the Church, the first step in the emancipation of spiritual religion from the forms of political life—a step not less significant that all its consequences were not seen till centuries had passed away. The community of true religion and the political

¹ Is. viii. 16-18.

community of Israel had never before been separated, even in thought ; now they stood side by side, conscious of their mutual antagonism, and never again fully to fall back into their old identity."¹

We must not, however, imagine that this severance had become formally complete. It was at the most only a temporary estrangement, but the possibility of an entire dissociation had been amply demonstrated ; and from henceforth the two ideals—political and religious—were not only capable of being separated, but on more than one occasion presented themselves as distinct, if not mutually exclusive.

An illustration of this is found in the prominent position assigned in the Psalter to *the humble* and *the poor*. Where they are mentioned, they are not to be regarded as a mere aggregation of individuals ; rather, they form a distinct and definite class. They are unpopular with their countrymen, they are oppressed by their haughty rulers, but they are the bearers of true religion, and as such claim and receive the protection of Jehovah's favour.

Jeremiah's conception of religion was so spiritual and subjective that it left little room for any idea of a religious organization. Its markedly individual tendency was still further emphasized by Ezekiel's unqualified assertion of personal responsibility. But this view of religion, if fitted to prepare the way for a more universalistic way of thinking—for a spiritual religion individually apprehended must transcend all local and national limitations—is yet manifestly incomplete. Now, it is in his recognition of this fact,

¹ *Prophets of Israel*, 274, 275.

and in the steps that he took to counteract its one-sided tendency, that Ezekiel's permanent greatness in the cause of religion is seen to lie. He is not less alive than Jeremiah himself to the value and reality of personal religion, but he supplements this teaching by the conception of an organized community in which the individual will find the truest scope for the exercise of his religion. The republic of Ezekiel is not a state at all; it is a church, organized after the manner of a state, for purely religious purposes. The centre of this new community is the Temple, and in it Jehovah dwells. Ezekiel thus gives a picture of a holy community sanctified by the presence of God in its midst. *And the name of the city shall be Jehovah is there.*¹

It is the same truth that underlies the importance attached to the rebuilding of the Temple. As its destruction and desecration symbolized the overthrow of all the nation's religious hopes and the withdrawal of Jehovah from its midst, so its re-erection and consecration implied the return of Jehovah to dwell among them, and also provided "the necessary centre for the people whose bond of unity must henceforth be their religion."²

Thus Deutero-Isaiah connected the rise of Cyrus not only with the building of Jerusalem, but also with the restoring of the Temple. Jehovah saith, *Of Jerusalem let her be built, and of the temple let her foundation be laid.*³ It is apparently to its erection that the prophet alludes when he comforts Zion with the assurance that Jehovah *will lay her stones with*

¹ Ezekiel xlviii. 35.

² Kirkpatrick, *Doctrine of Prophets*, 431.

³ Is. xlv. 28.

fair colours,¹ and lay her foundations with sapphires, and make her pinnacles of rubies and her gates as carbuncles.²

The rebuilding of the Temple had a double effect:

(1) Upon the Israelites themselves its erection made a most profound impression. Even before the destruction of Jerusalem, it was from Zion that Amos heard the voice of the Lord, and it was in the Temple that Isaiah first saw the vision and heard the voice of Jehovah of Hosts. When it had been rebuilt and stood as the centre, not only of national worship but also of national life, pious Israelites longed for the Temple as the place where they might see Jehovah's power and glory, and join with their scattered brethren in sacrifice and praise. We can trace this enthusiastic devotion to the service of God in the beautiful "songs of ascent" which belong to this period, and also in the yet more beautiful Ps. lxxxiv., whose date is uncertain. In some earlier Psalms the poet had expressed his passionate longing for the Temple as the House of God from whose joyous services he was debarred. *O send out thy light and thy truth, he prays, that they may lead me and bring me to thy holy hill and to thy dwelling, and that I may go unto the altar of God.*³ And now all obstacles are removed, and the Psalmist within the Temple precincts finds that *grace and glory* which with other good things the Lord will not withhold from them that live uprightly.⁴ Nowhere do we

¹ כִּרְבִּיץ בַּפִּיךְ אֲבִנֵיךְ, lit. "in antimony." LXX, ἀνθρακίς, suggests רִפְּיָךְ, but we should notice that in 1 Chron. xxix. 2, אֲבִנֵי פֶיךָ are mentioned for the decoration of the Temple.

² Is. liv. 11, 12.

³ Ps. xliii. 3.

⁴ lxxxiv. 11.

find a deeper sense of that personal communion with God which the Gospel has now placed within the reach of all.

(2) The rebuilding of the Temple was the re-establishment of Israel's religion, and this was a fact of far more than national moment. Once more the idea of universalism entered into the hopes of Israel.

It was Haggai who first realized the necessity of *being strong* to carry out the work of restoring the house of Jehovah. The people had apparently sunk into a state of listless indifference. They kept postponing and deferring *the time that the Lord's house should be built*.¹ Indeed, "they were rapidly reconciling themselves to an existence without a Temple; yet existence without a Temple would have meant (humanly speaking) the extinction of the national religion. To let it lie neglected was, alike for themselves and in the sight of the nations around, a practical denial of the truth which gave meaning to their return from exile, the truth which in different forms Haggai and Zechariah are never weary of repeating, that Jehovah had not cast off His people, but had in very deed returned to dwell in the city of His choice."²

The Jews responded to the prophets' appeal³ and set about the work in earnest. But when all was

¹ Hag. i. 2.

² Kirkpatrick, *D.P.* 421, 431.

³ Cf. especially the fine words of Zechariah:

*This is the word of the Lord unto Zerubbabel,
Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord
of hosts.*

Who art thou, O great mountain?

Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain (Zech. iv. 6, 10).

done, the sanctuary seemed very mean and inadequate—even when compared to the former house which it was intended to replace.

It was reserved for Haggai to predict the future glory of the new Temple. *Yet once—'tis but a little while—and I will shake the heavens and the earth and the sea and the dry land, and I will shake all nations and the desire of all nations shall come. The silver is mine and the gold is mine. The latter glory of this house shall be greater than the former, and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of Hosts.*¹

What do these words mean? They certainly imply that the re-erection of the Temple will be an event of universal significance. Its restoration, in fact, concerns others besides the Jews. The preservation of Israel's religion is of supra-national importance. The restored Temple has a yet more glorious future before it than ever the Temple in days of old—for it will no longer be merely the national sanctuary, but the centre of universal adoration where Jehovah will give to all His worshippers the blessing of peace.

But what is the meaning of "the desire of all nations"?

There can be little doubt that the phrase does not convey a personal reference, but denotes the desirable things of the nations—their wealth, their silver and gold—to which allusion is made in the same context.²

We must therefore abandon the directly Messianic reference of the passage, but it does not therefore

¹Hag. ii. 6, 9.

²See note at the end of this section.

follow that the passage is entirely destitute of Messianic significance. The Gentiles shall willingly bring of their costliest treasures to lay at the feet of Israel's God. And as Delitzsch justly remarks: "Not merely externally but also historically will this unsightly temple eclipse its predecessor,"¹ though we cannot follow him when he essays to prove that by the use of the word שָׁנִים Haggai meant to connect the latter glory of the Temple with the appearance of Him whom Micah called *Peace*, and Isaiah *the Prince of Peace*. It is true that Zechariah appears to have connected the building of the Temple with the bringing forth of the Branch,² but there is no indication that Haggai believed that the Messiah would come while the second Temple was still standing.

When the universalistic idea had once become attached to the Temple, it was not to be shaken off, and thus the existence of the second Temple was a constant reminder to Israel of its world-wide mission. This appears—though with a strongly Levitical colouring—in the prophecies of a universal pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

*And it shall come to pass that from one new moon to another, and from one sabbath to another shall all flesh come to worship before me, saith the Lord,*³ a prophecy which finds its counterpart in "Zechariah." *And it shall come to pass that everyone that is left of all the nations which came against Jerusalem shall go up from year to year to worship the king, the Lord of Hosts, and to keep the feast of tabernacles.*⁴

¹ Delitzsch, *Messianische Weissagungen*, 168.

² Zech. vi. 12.

³ Is. lxvi. 25.

⁴ Zech. xiv. 16-19.

We are not disposed to deny that these passages betray a spirit of narrow nationalism which compares unfavourably with the earlier promise that when the mountain of the Lord's house shall be exalted, all nations will flow into it and say: *Come and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob: and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth instruction and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem.* But granted that later prophecy viewed this spiritual conversion of the Gentiles as finding very material expression in outward feasts and pilgrimages, we cannot say that Levitical particularism really obscured the catholicity of these religious expectations, which, moreover, occasionally found utterance in passages from which every trace of nationalism is conspicuously absent. But even in Zechariah, whose "Levitishe Vergrößerungen" it is fashionable to despise, we should notice the religious basis on which his universalism is founded. *And the Lord shall be king over all the earth: in that day shall the Lord be one, and his name one* (xiv. 9). That is the kernel: universal religion based on the unity of God. The rest is but the shell needful for its present preservation. Thus all the earth is exhorted to *serve the Lord with gladness: and come before his presence with singing.*¹ But it is in Deutero-Isaiah that we find this hope depicted in the brightest and clearest colours. *Also the strangers . . . even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer; their burnt offerings and their sacrifices shall be accepted upon mine altar:*

¹ Ps. c. 1.

*for mine house shall be called an house of prayer for all peoples.*¹

Grand as is this conception, it was yet surpassed by other prophets. Zephaniah himself appears to have felt that the time would come when *men shall worship Jehovah, every one from his place, even all the isles of the nations*,² and a later hand has added to his book a very beautiful account of the conversion of the heathen world :

For then will I turn to the peoples a pure language that they may all call upon the name of the Lord to serve him with one consent.

From beyond the rivers of Ethiopia,³ *my suppliants even the daughter of my dispersed, shall bring mine offering.*⁴

Similarly in the book of Jonah, we cannot doubt

¹ Is. lvi. 6, 7.

² Zeph. ii. 11.

³ Ethiopia seems to be chosen as typical of the heathen for two reasons :

- (i) They were idealised by the ancient world. To Herodotus they were μέγιστοι καὶ κάλλιστοι ἀνθρώπων πάντων (Hdt. iii. 23). And Homer speaks of the gods as visiting and feasting μετ' ἀμύμονας Ἀιθιοπῆας (Il. i. 423).
- (ii) They were considered as being the most distant. Cf. *Odyssey*, i. 22, 23 :

Ἄλλ' ὁ μὲν Ἀιθιοπας μετεκίαθε τηλόθ' ἔοντας

Ἀιθιοπας τοὶ διχθὰ δεδαλαται ἔσχατοι ἀνδρῶν

οἱ μὲν δυσομένου Ἵππερίονος οἱ δ' ἀνίοντος.

It has always struck the present writer that the words of Isaiah xviii. 7, אֲרָצוֹ נְהָרִים בְּנֵי נֶחֱלִים, are rather to be explained as an allusion to this idea than to the κατετμήθη ἡ Ἀιγυπτος of Hdt. ii. 108. The ancients supposed that the land of Ethiopia was divided by the Ocean Stream. But no other scholar even alludes to the words of Homer in this connection.

⁴ Zeph. iii. 9, 10.

that an intentional contrast is drawn between the God-fearing sailors who represented the heathen world and the disobedient prophet, the representative of Israel. He *rose up to flee unto Tarshish from the presence of the Lord*.¹ They *feared the Lord exceedingly and offered a sacrifice unto the Lord* (and the context implies that it was acceptable, though we hear of no pilgrimage to Jerusalem for the purpose) *and made vows*.²

We are thus prepared for the amazing declaration of Malachi, that :

*From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same my name is great among the Gentiles; and in every place incense is offered unto my name and a pure offering: for my name is great among the Gentiles, saith the Lord of hosts.*³

Now it is natural that in the face of such broad-minded catholicity, many scholars should have been led to read into the words a future sense,⁴ but such is really grammatically and exegetically impossible.

- (i) *Great my name among the nations* (גָּדוֹלִי נְשִׂימִי בַּגּוֹיִם) cannot by itself have a future reference. As it stands it must be a statement of fact.
- (ii) *In every place incense is offered* (בְּכָל־מְקוֹם מִקְטֹרֶת) is plainly antithetical to *but ye defile* (וְאַתֶּם מִדְּבִילִים), and, as one is undoubtedly present, so, it is only natural to suppose, is the other.

¹ Jonah, i. 3.

² i. 16.

³ Mal. i. 11.

⁴ Cf. A.V.

- (iii) We should also note the parallel of verse 14, where even the A.V. is not bold enough to continue to use the future: *for I am a great king, saith the Lord of hosts, and my name is dreadful among the Gentiles.*

The only justification for taking the words in a future sense consists in some dubious *a priori* considerations. "It is *hardly possible* that the prophet could use such words of the contemporary heathen world. It must accordingly be a future expectation expressed by Malachi in the language of the present."¹ But such a *petitio principii* is not sufficient to silence the claims of grammar and context.

Putting aside, then, the interpretation which would regard the words as a prediction of the calling of the Gentiles and the rejection of the Jews, and of the world-wide acceptance of the sacrifice of the death of Christ, let us see what meaning the words bear when applied to the contemporary circumstances of the author.

(1) There is, first, the theory that the verse refers to the proselytes from heathenism, who had learned to offer acceptable sacrifices to the true God. Thus Orelli speaks of proselytes "of whom numerous and illustrious examples were continually becoming more and more well known."² But of such conversions at this period, history tells us nothing.

(2) The next interpretation is that "the Jews of the Dispersion, scattered throughout the world in the midst of the Gentiles, rendered by their offerings of prayer and praise a more acceptable service

¹ Delitzsch, *Messianische Weissagungen*, 179.

² *Die xii. Propheten*, p. 214.

to Jehovah than the careless priests in the Temple at Jerusalem by their heartless and contemptible sacrifices." ¹

The objections to this view are, first, that it cannot be regarded as an adequate explanation of verse 14—*for I am a great king and my name is great among the Gentiles*—and, secondly, that it scarcely does justice to the very emphatic language of the prophet, *in every place* (בְּכָל-מָקוֹם) and *among the nations* (בְּגוֹיִם).

(3) We thus adopt the third view which takes the words in the *prima facie* sense. The prophet was prepared to recognize the elements of true religion which lay beneath much of the worship of the heathen world. The Jews had been brought into closest contact with the pure doctrines of Zoroastrianism, and we cannot be surprised that a prophet should recognize that men were everywhere *seeking if haply they might feel after God and find him: for indeed he is not far from each one of us*.² We must be careful not to miss the force of the statement. It is not that the lives, but that the very sacrifices of the heathen are pleasing to Him *who made of one blood every nation of men*.

When we consider the time of the composition of this prophecy and the bitter hatred of its author for Edom, not to mention the strong value he attached to the religious ordinances of the law, it is all the more amazing that he should have risen to this generous appreciation of Gentile worship. Indeed, on any interpretation the words show clearly enough that religion was not and could

¹ Kirkpatrick, *D.P.* 509.

² Acts xvii. 27.

not be limited to Jerusalem, while the emphasis laid on the *pure offering*¹ characterizes such worship as spiritual and acceptable to Him to whom it is offered.

We have now seen how even in Old Testament times *the way was prepared* for the establishment of a religious community, completely independent of all national forms, and based upon the recognition of a common faith in Jehovah's unity and goodness. We have noticed in this connection the growth of that intense personal religion which distinguishes the Psalms of the period. Finally we observed that the spirit of universalism became so predominant that Zephaniah and Malachi actually detached the idea of true worship from Jerusalem altogether.

Such teaching is evidential in the highest degree. In this phase of prophetic universalism we cannot but see the educative wisdom of God *preparing the way* for the establishment of a Church whose glory should be its catholicity, and whose strength should lie in the abiding presence of her Lord, a Church for *all the nations and all the days*, a Church which abrogated all distinctions of time and place—*For the hour cometh that neither in this mountain nor in Jerusalem shall ye worship the Father—the hour cometh, yea and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth.*²

¹ The fact that the whole emphasis is laid upon the מִזְבֵּחַ forbids us to see in the מִנְחָה an intimation of the abolition of animal sacrifices.

² St. John iv. 4-23.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON HAGGAI II, 6-9. Cf. p. 328.

The Vulgate translation, *Et veniet desideratus cunctis gentibus*, which refers the words to the advent of a personal Messiah, is really quite untenable. If this were the case, the plural form of the verb would be perfectly inexplicable. The LXX translates ἡξει τὰ ἐκλεκτὰ τῶν ἐθνῶν. This gives a good sense and can claim some support. Thus, Is. lx. 5, the Hebrew has

יִהְיֶה עֲבוֹדָה תְּמִידָה
לְפָנֵי הַגּוֹיִם וְכָל הַיָּמִים

where the LXX oddly enough eliminates the personal reference, μεταβαλεῖ εἰς σὲ πλοῦτος θαλάσσης καὶ ἐθνῶν καὶ λαῶν καὶ ἡξουσὶ σοι. But on a comparison with lxi. 6 we see that חֵיל הַגּוֹיִם means not *the host of nations* but *the wealth of nations*.¹

This is the most probable meaning of the Hebrew in this passage, יִהְיֶה חֵיל הַמְּדִת בְּלִפְנֵי הַגּוֹיִם, (perhaps we should read with Klosterman, חֵיל הַמְּדִת), and thus it is taken in the R.V., which renders חֵיל הַמְּדִת by *desirable things*. This is borne out by the context, which speaks of the silver and gold, and is strongly supported by the parallel passage in Isaiah already quoted, while the use of חֵיל הַמְּדִת receives a complete illustration in 1 S. ix. 20, יִהְיֶה חֵיל הַמְּדִת וְיִשְׂרָאֵל, which the versions have all rightly understood.²

§ II. THE PRIEST.

As the Kingdom was unthinkable without the King, so the idea of a Church inevitably suggested

¹ The LXX rendering of Haggai ii. 7 would derive some support from Is. xviii. 7 were the text of that passage beyond question. But we have seen that a ם should in all probability be inserted before עָם.

² LXX. τίτι τὰ ὥρατα τοῦ Ἰσραὴλ; Vulg. *Et cujus erunt optima quaeque Israel?* R.V. *All that is desirable.*

the idealization of the office and functions of the Priest. But again, just as the most religious minds recognized that it was the creation of a prophetic people rather than the rise of an individual prophet, however great, that should fulfil the spiritual ideal set before Israel, so it was widely felt that the realization of the priestly ideal would not consist so much in the appearance of a perfect priest as in the response of the entire nation to the priestly character which it possessed by God's ordinance and promise.

That Israel was a priestly nation was an idea which had originated very early. The inauguration of the Sinaitic covenant following upon the redemption from Egypt stamped the children of Israel as a *peculiar people*. They were to be henceforth the private and exclusive possession of Jehovah—this at least is implied by the expression, עַם סְגוּלָה,—and in this character they should become to the world what their own priests were to themselves; that is to say, they might be considered the priestly mediators of humanity. *If therefore ye will indeed obey my voice and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests and an holy nation.*¹ The word *kingdom* probably means little more than "people" with the idea of Divine government superadded, but we should nevertheless observe in this early passage the union of the royal and priestly ideals in one conception.

Israel's priesthood received the most emphatic recognition from the exilic and post-exilic Prophets.

¹ Exodus xix. 5 (probably by J.).

Thus Zechariah represents *ten men out of all languages of the nations* as taking hold of *the skirt of him that is a Jew*, saying, *We will go with you ; for we have heard that God is with you ;*¹ and this is very much the position of the nations towards Israel as defined by the Second Isaiah. In one passage, however, this belief is definitely formulated : *Strangers shall stand and feed your flocks, and the sons of aliens shall be your plowmen and vinedressers : but ye shall be named the priests of the Lord, men shall call you the ministers of the Lord.*² The Kingdom of God should therefore be a kingdom of priests—all standing in close relation to Him, and all fulfilling a mediatorial function with regard to “those without.” But as the idea of the kingdom grew so as to include all nations,³ and as the conception of religion based upon the unity of God became so broad and generous as even to recognize the acceptableness of heathen worship,⁴ the prophet seems to have recognized that the priesthood would not be restricted to any particular class or peoples. *The Gentiles shall bring all your brethren for an offering unto the Lord out of all nations . . . to my holy mountain Jerusalem, saith the Lord, as the children of Israel bring an offering in a clean vessel to the house of the Lord. And of them also will I take for priests, for Levites, saith the Lord.*⁵

¹ Zech. viii. 23.

² Is. lxi. 5, 6.

³ Cf. pp. 218-236.

⁴ Mal. i. 11.

⁵ Is. lxvi. 20, 21. It must be admitted, however, that this interpretation is somewhat uncertain. It is natural to regard “lvi. 6 as the utmost limit of concession to foreigners” (Skinner, *C.B.S. in loco*). But the language there seems to go almost as far as that in our present passage. For it speaks of *the sons of the stranger, that join themselves*

We can trace a somewhat similar extension in the Psalter. It is *the children of Israel* that are *near to Jehovah*,¹ that is to say, who can enjoy the privilege of priestly access. And this priestly character resident in the community is to some extent shared by every faithful Israelite. *Happy is the man whom thou choosest*, sings the Psalmist, *and causest to approach unto thee that he may dwell in thy courts*.² But the nations are not to be denied the privilege which belongs to each member of the kingdom. The priests in their ministrations were clothed in holy garments *for glory and for beauty*; ³ the ministering spirits in heaven worshipped Jehovah *in holy array*; ⁴ and now *Give unto the Lord, O ye families of the peoples*, cries the poet, *give unto Jehovah glory and praise. . . . Bring an offering and come into his courts. O worship Jehovah in holy array, fear before him, all the earth*.⁵

We are so accustomed to associate together the ideas of priesthood and sacrifice, that it requires a distinct effort to realize how little the element of sacrifice entered into the conception of the priestly office. A priest was indeed appointed to offer sacrifice; but this was, as it were, only an incidental

unto the Lord, as *ministering unto him* (לשרת לו)—the word invariably used of priestly service at the sanctuary. Moreover, the words ונס מהם לקחתי are so emphatic as to be almost unmeaning, were the prophet not contemplating a great extension of the Levitical Law. Indeed, he was looking for *a new heaven and a new earth* (Is. lxvi. 22), and it seems more in keeping with this standpoint, if we suppose that the words are intended to suspend all national and hereditary distinctions as qualifications for serving in the sacred ministry.

¹ Ps. lxxviii. 4. ² lxxv. 4. ³ Ex. xxviii. 2.

⁴ Ps. xxix. 2. ⁵ xcvi. 7-9.

and adventitious part of his functions. For the priestly office did not imply a mechanical routine of continually recurring sacrifices: it was rather a moral position, involving moral responsibilities. The priests were the authorized directors of the people in all moral, religious, and ceremonial matters. *The priest's lips should keep knowledge and they should seek instruction at his mouth: for he is the messenger of the Lord of hosts*;¹ and one of the earliest prophets had expressed precisely the same view of the priestly office: *Because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me*.² The priest was the authorized mediator between God and man; *the messenger of the Lord of hosts*. He was therefore the fittest person to offer sacrifice. For though he was a man like all his fellow worshippers, he yet stood in a unique relation to Jehovah, and it was this which really constituted his priestly character. He, though man, could *come near to Jehovah*, and in him humanity could approach the throne of God. This is the essential element in the conception of priesthood—nearness to God.

But if the priest was near to God, he had a double duty, to himself and to his people. For himself, he must be holy, if he was to approach the Holy Lord. The conception of holiness seems at first to have involved little more than the idea of separation. The word (קדוש) could be applied to any person or object consecrated solely to religious purposes. These were, however, required to be free from physical blemish, and the idea of purity thus introduced was not long in acquiring an ethical

¹ Mal. ii. 7.² Hos. iv. 6.

significance. Holiness could then be more properly predicated of the Deity ; and as men's religious and theological ideas were enlarged and developed, the word itself was continually acquiring a deeper and more spiritual meaning, until it came to connote the most essential attribute of the Godhead. This sense was of course reflected back on all the earlier senses, and thus the idea of a holy priesthood corresponded to the conception of a holy God. We may assert with confidence that holiness was considered to be one of the most essential characteristics of a priest.

Now it is particularly noticeable that just as Israel was conceived to be a kingdom of priests, so she was called to be *a holy nation*.¹ Holiness was not to be merely the distinctive attribute of the priesthood, but the normal characteristic of the nation—a view formulated in the demand that *Ye shall (all) be holy as I the Lord your God am holy*.² And so in the Messianic days it would come to pass that all would be *called holy, even every one that was written for life in Jerusalem*.³

But the priest had also a duty to his people. He was the steward of the oracles of God. It appertained to him to give them all the religious instruction they desired or needed, and he had a yet further duty. He was expected to make intercession for his flock. Thus the Psalmist speaks of *a Moses and an Aaron among his priests, and a Samuel among such as call upon his name: when they call upon the Lord, he answereth them*.⁴ And

¹ Ex. xix. 5.

² Lev. xix. 2.

³ Is. iv. 3.

⁴ Ps. xcix. 6.

the historical books are full of instances of this priestly intercession.¹

These then are the four main elements in the idea of priesthood :

- (i.) The priest as representing God had to instruct and direct his people.
- (ii.) The priest as representing man, had access to God.
- (iii.) He should be *holy* as one set apart for the service of a holy God.
- (iv.) He should intercede for the flock committed to his charge.

But if the ideal was a *kingdom of priests*, it was not an ideal incompatible with the delegation of special priestly functions to specially designated ministers. The very people to whom the title *kingdom of priests* (ממלכת כהנים) was applied, yet possessed a regular ministry of duly consecrated priests (כהנים). The expression denoted "not a mere aggregate of individual priests, but a priestly community. Such a priesthood is doubtless shared by each member of the community in due measure, but only in so far as he is virtually an organ of the whole body ; and the universality of the function is compatible with variations of mode and degree as to its exercise."²

We accordingly find special families connected with the priesthood. In the "Blessing of Moses" we first find Levi firmly established as the priestly tribe—to instruct and direct, to burn incense and

¹ Ex. xvii. 11 ; Numb. xiv. 13 ; Numb. xvi. 46 ; 1 S. vii. 8, 9 ; cf. Jer. xv. 1.

² Hort, *First Epistle of St. Peter*, 126.

*offer sacrifice.*¹ We read of *the everlasting covenant of peace* with which God blessed the zeal of Phinehas,² because *he rose up and executed judgment.*³ Abraham's faith and Phinehas' zeal had the same reward. *It was counted unto him for righteousness unto all generations for evermore.* Thus Phinehas received *the covenant of an everlasting priesthood.*

The priesthood and the monarchy were thus conceived as resting on a very similar basis—on the everlasting covenant established by Jehovah with the original founder; and this parallel between *the two families which the Lord hath chosen* is actually drawn in prophetic literature. *Thus saith the Lord: David shall never want a man to sit upon the throne of the house of Israel, neither shall the priests, the Levites, want a man before me to offer burnt offerings and to burn oblations and to do sacrifice continually.*⁴

But the parallel is most curiously complete—since in both cases we witness the rejection of one house in favour of another. A man of God came to Eli to rebuke him for the conduct of his sons. *Therefore the Lord, the God of Israel, saith, I said indeed that thy house and the house of thy father should walk before me for ever: but now the Lord saith be it far from me, for them that honour me will I honour, and they that despise me shall be lightly esteemed.* (Note once more the moral and conditional elements in prophecy.) *Behold the days come that I will cut off thine arm—and there shall no more be an old man in thine house. Yet one I will not cut off belonging to thee from my altar, that he may consume thine eyes*

¹ Dt. xxxiii. 10. ² Numb. xxv. 6-15. ³ Ps. cvi. 30. ⁴ Jer. xxxiii. 17-25.

*and grieve thy heart. And this shall be a sign . . . Hophni and Phinehas, in one day they shall die both of them. And I will raise me up a faithful priest that shall do according to that which is in mine heart and in my mind ; and I will build him a sure house ; and he shall walk before mine anointed for ever.*¹

The main interest of the passage for us lies in the illustration it affords of the invariable tendency of the Old Testament to conceive every institution both in its origin and in its continuance as a personal affair, bound up with the character or fate of some concrete individual. From this time the permanence of the priesthood is bound up with the idea of a faithful priest.

This constant personification was also operative in the opposite direction. The prophetic-priestly school who came into prominence at the Exile began in accordance with the teaching of Ezekiel to draw up an ideal picture of Israel's past history in which the ideas of priesthood and mediation were given an illustrative embodiment in the figure of Aaron the high priest, to whom all the Levitical families traced their descent. But the Old Testament knew of a greater priesthood than that of Aaron. Melchizedek² had combined in himself the offices of king and priest, the two highest dignities attainable among the Jews, while his mysterious

¹ 1 Sam. ii. 27-36. Who is this faithful priest? Two predictions appear to have become mixed together: (1) the destruction of Eli's house (the survival of Ahitub) and its replacement by Samuel; (2) the survival of Abiathan out of the massacre at Nob, and his final supersession by Zadok. The question is complicated by critical difficulties. Cf. Driver, *Books of Samuel*, pp. 32, 33.

² Gen. xiv.

appearance in the earliest days of patriarchal history suggested something higher than the merely hereditary office of the sons of Aaron.

In the history and person of Melchizedek the religious thought of Israel recognized the fulfilment of an ideal after which it had long striven, but which it had only very partially attained—the union in one man of the royal and priestly dignities. The first definite expression of this hope is perhaps to be found in Jeremiah. He is speaking of the re-establishment of the State as aforetime. *And their prince shall be of themselves, and their ruler shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near and he shall approach unto me* (notice the use of those two priestly words): *for who is he that hath boldness to approach unto me? saith the Lord.*¹

Another step in this direction was taken by Ezekiel. In his reconstituted theocracy the *prince* supplies the place of the king. The Jews had lost all interest in foreign politics, which had become the exclusive concern of their conquerors: and internally the Spirit and Presence of Jehovah had effected such a moral change, that there was henceforth no need for the exercise of any judicial activity. The *prince* therefore was to confine himself exclusively to those duties which would naturally fall on the head of a purely theocratic state—the maintenance of the temple services, and the provision of the proper sacrifices.

¹Jer. xxx. 21. Giesebrecht brackets the whole chapter, but apparently excepts these verses. "Als echt lassen sich höchstens betrachten welche in bei J. wohl möglichen Gedanken die Zukunft des heil. Volkes darstellen," p. 161.

It is when we come to Zechariah that we meet with the most important advance in the position assigned to the priesthood. As was always the case, historical circumstances furnished the starting-point for the new prophetic ideals. Israel's restoration had taken place, but it was as a Church rather than as a nation that the Jews returned to their native country. Their interests were religious: their objects theocratic—to found the temple and establish a holy community. There is therefore no cause for surprise when we find Joshua the high priest associated with Zerubbabel the governor in the task of organizing and ruling the returned exiles. The exaltation of the priesthood to a position of real importance in the affairs of the state, and the harmonious co-operation between the civil and ecclesiastical heads of the community suggested a number of thoughts which prophecy was not slow to develop; and it is the development and expression of these that give such importance to the book of Zechariah.

In a series of eight visions he addresses *words of comfort*¹ and encouragement to his somewhat despondent countrymen; and of those the two most important are that of the high priest before the throne of God, and of the great candlestick fed with oil by the two olive trees. In the former vision Joshua stands before Jehovah, and at his right hand stands Satan, the accuser. But Jehovah rebukes Satan (who then disappears from the scene), and addresses himself to the High Priest. At this juncture the prophet perceives that he is clad in filthy garments,

¹ *Comfortable words*, i. 13.

emblematic of the sin and misery of the people whom he represents. And the angel of the Lord answered and spake unto those that stood before him: *Take the filthy garments from off him. And unto him he said: Behold I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with rich apparel. And I said, Let them set a fair mitre¹ upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head and clothed him with garments.*² Here, then, we are once more in the circle of those ideas which we saw were especially characteristic of the prophetic representation of the new covenant. The whole people of Israel are pardoned in the person of their high priest, who stands before God as their representative, by a great act of sin-forgiving grace.

But that is not all. A word of special promise for Joshua is appended. *Thus saith the Lord of hosts. If thou wilt walk in my ways and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house and shalt keep my courts—and I will give thee a place of access among these that stand by.*³ This is a promise for people as well as priest. For the priest appears in the presence of Jehovah on their behalf, and they, knowing that this right of entry is eternally secure, can feel certain that their prayers will always be laid before God through Joshua's high priestly mediation.

But a second promise follows: *Hear now, O Joshua the high priest, thou and thy fellows that sit before thee are men of omen that lo! I will bring*

¹ צִנִּיף: מִצְנֶפֶת (from the same root) is the head-dress of the prince of Israel (Ez. xxi. 31) and of the high priest (Ex. xxviii. 37).

² iii. 1-5.

³ iii. 7.

*forth my servant the Branch.*¹ It may be that the original allusion was to Zerubbabel whom Haggai appears to have identified with the Messianic King.² It may be that he had not yet returned from exile—and that Joshua's safe return is here pictured as a guarantee of the safe arrival of the rest of his countrymen. But whatever the immediate reference, we should notice two points: (1) that Joshua is not himself the Branch, (2) that his faithful priesthood is brought into closest connection with Messiah's advent.

This vision is followed by another which, though specially intended to convey a message of encouragement for Zerubbabel answering to that already given to Joshua, yet is careful to recognize the equal importance and dignity of the religious and civil heads of Israel.³ It seems impossible to explain the exact significance of every feature in this vision: it has "some curious fantastic details only possible in dream and symbol."⁴ But its general meaning is perfectly clear. The two olive trees which supply the lamp with oil are *the two sons of oil which stand before the Lord of the whole earth*. Joshua and Zerubbabel, Priest and Prince, are the ordained channels through which Jehovah's revelation is made luminous in Israel. The idea suggests much more than that the two anointed heads of the community are under the protection of God's good providence;⁵ it implies rather that "theirs was the equal and co-ordinate duty of sustaining the temple,

¹ Zech. iii. 8.

² Hag. ii. 20-23.

³ Zech. iv.

⁴ G. A. Smith, *The Twelve Prophets*, p. 298.

⁵ E.g. Nowack, *Die kleine Propheten*, p. 357.

figured by the whole candelabrum, and ensuring the brightness of the sevenfold revelation. The temple, that is to say, is nothing without the monarchy and the priesthood behind it, and these stand in the immediate presence of God.”¹

We now pass to the symbolical action for which the visions had prepared. No passage in the whole Bible is more complicated with critical and exegetical difficulties. Zechariah is bidden to meet the members of a deputation from the Jews still in exile, who have sent generous pecuniary assistance to the relief of their poor brethren in Judea, and to take sufficient silver and gold to make crowns and set them upon the head of Joshua the priest. And this is the oracle that he delivers in the name of the Lord of hosts :

*Behold the man whose name is the Branch ; and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the temple of the Lord (even he shall build the temple of the Lord)—and he shall bear the glory, and he shall sit and rule upon his throne, and he shall be a priest upon his throne, and the counsel of peace shall be between them both.*²

That Joshua was actually crowned seems unlikely. Indeed it appears to be excluded by the note that the prophet appends to the account of this transaction. *And ye shall know that the Lord of hosts hath sent me unto you. And this shall come to pass, if ye will diligently obey the voice of the Lord your God.*³

Now, why should *crowns* be spoken of in the

¹ G. A. Smith, *The Twelve Prophets*, p. 298.

² Zech. vi. 13.

³ vi. 14.

plural? especially when only one person is to be crowned? Further, what is the meaning of *between them both*?

The explanations which have been suggested are fully discussed at the end of this chapter.

It seems most likely that the coronation of Zerubabel was originally referred to, and the active association of Joshua the high priest with the former's peaceful rule. The prophecies of Zechariah, therefore, if not actually uniting the characters of king and priest in one person, yet undoubtedly prepared the way for such a union. The priest at the right hand of the king, acting with him in the most harmonious and peaceful co-operation, enjoying the privilege of immediate access to Jehovah's throne to lay before Him the supplications of the people whose spiritual representative he was, furnished an ideal which operated powerfully on men's minds; and when once this ideal of a faithful priest had been conceived, hope immediately suggested that one would be raised up for its fulfilment.

The combination of the two offices in one person received a fresh stimulus in the time of the Maccabees. Thus we are told, *εὐδόκησαν οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι τοῦ εἶναι Σίμωνα ἡγούμενον καὶ ἀρχιερέα εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα*,¹ and it is apparently to this age that we must attribute the composition of the CXth Psalm.² Here a

¹ I Macc. xiv. 41.

² The question of the authorship of this Psalm involves so much controversy that the present writer prefers to state what appears to him the most probable opinion rather than institute a lengthy discussion which would have but a slight bearing on the subject in hand. He may however state:

warrior-king is addressed (though it is very noticeable that the word "king" is not used) by the poet :

Oracle of Jehovah to my lord (the king)—

*"Sit thou on my right hand
Until I make thine enemies thy footstool."*

*"The Lord hath sworn and will not repent
Thou art a priest for ever
After the order of Melchizedek."*

The priestly function of the king is not described. It may be that he is only the representative of his people, who freely offer themselves to fight his battles. They, as the consecrated warriors of Jehovah, are clad *in holy array*: and so the king at their head is also regarded as a priest constituted by the direct appointment of Jehovah. But the precise sphere of his priestly activity is left undefined. It was enough for the Psalmist to declare that the Messianic age would see the two highest dignities in Israel no longer held separately by two persons, but united together in one who as King sat on Jehovah's right hand, and as Priest stood before Him, the holy representative of a holy people.

In conclusion we should specially notice the

- (i.) That he does not consider the single occurrence of נאם ירור in this poem as inconsistent with the generally prophetless character of the Maccabean age.
- (ii.) The occasional priestly acts of David and Solomon could hardly be said to have been conferred by a Divine decree.
- (iii.) Our Lord's use of the Psalm—where He is arguing *a concessis* leaves the critical question quite untouched.

phraseology of the closing verses of Ps. cxxxii. (17, 18):

*"There will I make a horn to sprout forth for David,
I have ordained a lamp for mine anointed.¹
His enemies will I cloth² with shame,
But upon himself shall his crown flourish.*

Now, the words of 17, *I will make a horn to sprout forth* (אֶצְמִיחַ קֶרֶן), are used in Ezek. xxix. 21 of the renewed prosperity of the nation. but the addition of *for David* in this passage shows that a personal reference is intended to *the man whose name is the Branch* (cf. also Jer. xxiii. 5, Zech. vi. 12), and as such the verse appears in 14 b of the Eighteen Benedictions.

Cause the branch (צֶמֶחַ) of David thy servant speedily to spring forth: and let his house be exalted in thy salvation: for we wait for thy salvation day by day. Blessed art thou, O Lord, that causest the horn of salvation to spring forth.

But it is to the last verse that we would specially direct attention. It seems to contain an incontestable reference to the scene so vividly depicted in Zech. iii.

The word used for crown (קִירוֹ) is not only applicable to the diadem of a king,² but to the head-dress of the high priest;³ while the words *shall flourish* (יִצְיֵן) seem to refer to the golden plate inscribed with the words *Holiness to the Lord* which was affixed to his turban.⁴ Here then "David"⁵ is arrayed in priestly garments while his enemies are clothed with shame,

¹ The preparing of the lamp had already been put into David's mouth as a metaphor for the preservation of his dynasty (Ps. xviii.).

² 2 S. i. 10.

³ Ex. xxix. 6.

⁴ Ex. xxix. 30.

⁵ Cf. Ezekiel, "David" = Messiah.

like the filthy garments which the angel had taken away from him. The phraseology no less than the reference to the *branch* suggests not only that this writer had Zech. iii. in his mind, but that he went further and invested the future king with priestly dignity.

How far then is the Messianic hope connected with priestly ideals?

(1) The nation was called to be a kingdom of priests; and in the Messianic age the nation would respond to its vocation. Every single member of the kingdom should have the right of immediate access to Jehovah's presence.

(2) At the head of this priestly nation should stand a great high priest as their spiritual representative through whose mediation the prayers of the nation might always be presented before Jehovah.

(3) The main ideas suggested by the priesthood—holiness and consecration and authoritative teaching—would naturally find in him their highest embodiment.

(4) This priest was connected with and finally identified with the Messianic king.

(5) We ought also to observe how closely the conception of the servant of the Lord approaches the circle of priestly ideas.

He too has a "Torah" wherewith to instruct the nations:

He too lives in the most intimate communion with Jehovah;

He too is a sinless character—a character truly "holy";

He too makes intercession for the transgressors—and that by the most effectual sacrifice, the sacrifice of himself.

It was in the ideas of personal holiness, constant access to God, and effectual intercession for his fellow-men that the conception of priesthood proved most fruitful. An office so high and so beneficent might well be associated with the royal dignity. And as the element of universality entered into the one, so it was bound to affect the other. Where then are we to look for Him who perfectly fulfilled these varied functions?

We can surely see the wonderful depth of the answer which the opening verses of the Epistle to the Hebrews gives to this question. *God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in a Son who . . . when he had made purification of sins (as Priest) sat down (as King) on the right hand of the majesty on high.*

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON ZECH. VI. 10-13.

(1) Keeping the present text we must regard the whole episode as an account of the crowning of Joshua the high priest, and his installation in the regal office. There can be no possible doubt that the writer intends to represent Joshua as crowned king. The symbolical action, *the crowns, the glory, the throne, the sitting, the ruling*, cannot be metaphorical. They are the language employed to represent an actual coronation.

Joshua is not only crowned king—without any mention of Zerubbabel, the son of David and the recognized civil head of Jerusalem—but he appears to be identified with the Branch from whom he has been previously distinguished; and he is given a work to do which is elsewhere assigned to Zerubbabel.

If we keep the reading *crowns* we must suppose that two were made to figure the royal and the priestly dignity, but עטרת is used of a single crown in Job xxxi. 36, or it may

be pointed עֲנִיָּה so that no stress can be laid on any argument drawn from the form of this word.

But how are we to explain *between them both*—for only one person has been mentioned. The words cannot possibly be explained of two offices united in one person. But where are we to seek for the second? We are driven to suppose that *they both* must refer to Jehovah and the priest-king. But this is so obviously impossible without any earlier introduction of Jehovah's name that we are compelled to adopt the violent assumption that the suffix *in his throne* (בְּכִסֵּאֵהוּ) refers not as one would expect from every grammatical analogy to the Branch, but to God. We do not of course deny that the king's throne might be called *the throne of Jehovah* as in 1 Chron. xxix. 23, but we do deny that a suffix which no one would naturally dream of interpreting in such a way could suffice to introduce a phrase so unusual and so significant. Moreover, as Jehovah Himself is the speaker, we should desiderate *my throne* not *his throne*. And how would it be possible to express the relation of a man to God as something "between the two of them." Such an expression would be absolutely unheard of in the Old Testament, which, to judge by analogy, would prefer to use a double clause when speaking of Jehovah and man—*Between me and thee*—rather than "between us two." And again, how could the use of third pronominal suffix be justified when Jehovah Himself is the speaker?

When to these grammatical impossibilities we add the fact that Joshua has been formally inaugurated as high priest, that one of the visions expressly represents the civil and the religious heads of the community on a perfect equality, that Joshua is here the same as the Branch from whom he has been previously distinguished, and with whom Zerubbabel has in all probability been identified; when we further recollect that the work which is here assigned to Joshua is precisely that which is elsewhere specially predicated of Zerubbabel, and finally, that in this passage the latter is not even mentioned, we feel driven to welcome any conjecture which will give an adequate explanation of these apparently inexplicable phenomena.

(2) We therefore agree with those critics who suppose that

the text has been tampered with, and that it originally contained a reference to Zerubbabel. Now, this view is presented in two forms:

(a) Ewald suggests that we should insert *and upon the head of Zerubbabel* in verse 11. The two crowns would then account for the use of the plural form, and also for the *two of them*. The main difficulty in the way of accepting this attractive conjecture lies in the facts that:

- (i) the Hebrew text after all recognizes but a single crown, והעטרת תהיה, in 14.
- (ii) verse 12 distinctly describes a single, not a double, coronation.
- (iii) if two people are alluded to, one is in so definitely a superior position to the other that two coronations simultaneous in time and identical in form would have been most misleading.

(b) Most modern critics believe that the name of Joshua is an interpolation, and that the original either ran:

And thou shalt take silver and gold and make a crown and say to them

(i.e. omitting the words "and shall set it, etc.")

or *And thou . . . and make a crown and set it on the head of Zerubbabel.*

(i.e. deleting "Joshua the son of Jozedek, the high priest," and reading "Zerubbabel" instead.)

We should then have to understand or supply the name "Joshua" in 13. *And he will build the temple of the Lord and he shall bear his (royal) glory and sit and rule upon his throne, and (Joshua) shall be a priest upon his throne.* The last phrase is peculiar, but here the LXX comes to our aid—*καὶ ἔσται ὁ ἱερεὺς ἐκ δεξιῶν αὐτοῦ*, i.e. עַל־יְמִינִי or יְמִינִי.

But the reading of the LXX suggests another most simple alteration which does not appear to have occurred to any scholars, but which yet explains the origin of the whole corruption. LXX reads *καὶ αὐτὸς λήμψεται ἀρετήν . . . καὶ ἔσται ὁ ἱερεὺς* by the introduction of the definite article before *ἱερεὺς*, carefully distinguishing the two subjects. *He*

shall receive strength, etc., and the priest shall be at his right hand. Now the priest could have been no other than Joshua—just as the Branch would have been understood as referring to Zerubbabel. There would therefore have been no need of specification by name, as it was obvious who were the individuals intended.

This suggests the simple emendation of the Hebrew already referred to. Instead of reading יהיה כהן we should read יהיה הכהן. This would obviate the necessity of inserting יהושע, the omission of whose name would otherwise be rather hard to explain.

We therefore believe the original oracle to have run thus :

*And the word of the Lord came to me saying . . .
And thou shalt take silver and gold and make a crown
And speak (unto them) saying
Thus speaketh Jehovah of hosts, saying
Behold the man whose name is the Branch (lit. Shoot)
And he shall grow up out of his place*

(ימתחטיר יצמיה) perhaps better lit. *it shall shoot up under him*—i.e. under him all shall prosper, cf. 2 S. xxiii. 5)

*And he shall build the temple of the Lord
And he shall bear the royal glory
And shall sit and rule upon his throne
And the priest shall be at his right hand*

(Exactly following LXX)

And there shall be a counsel of peace between the two of them.

In the original oracle, it is most probable that no names were mentioned at all—we may perhaps suppose that political reasons had something to do with this vagueness (to which we may compare the studious silence of the Synoptist narrative as to the actual person that smote the high priest's servant). To the contemporaries of the prophet all would be clear; but to a later age "the Priest" would be the only unambiguous reference. This was rightly interpreted of Joshua, and then it was imagined that the whole oracle was addressed to him;

and this led to the insertion of the gloss in 11: "and thou shalt set it upon the head of Joshua the son of Jozedek the high priest." This seems far preferable to supposing that the name of Zerubbabel was deliberately removed and that of Joshua put into its place.

We may further remark that such an interpretative gloss would have been very natural to an age which witnessed the actual combination of kingly and high-priestly prerogatives in the princes of the Maccabean line, who at least for the moment entirely supplanted the idea of a king of Davidic descent.

PART V.

THE MESSIAH.

IN the course of our investigations we have not infrequently employed the terms "Messiah" and "Messianic" to denote the king and the kingdom in which the hope of Jewish prophecy centred. But as a matter of fact it seems very probable that the term was never actually so applied by the Old Testament writers, and we now propose to trace briefly the history of the word. Such a discussion will not be out of place when dealing with the evidential value of prophecy; for the word "Christianity" means the religion of the Messiah, and the name of Messiah (in its Greek form *Χριστός*) is the commonest designation of Jesus in the New Testament. We shall now endeavour to see what preparation was made by the Old Testament in general, and by prophecy in particular, for this cardinal conception of Christian belief.

I. The word was used of the kings of Israel and Judah.¹ This was its most frequent application, and the expression is particularly common in the

¹ 1 S. ii. 10, 35; xii. 3; xxiv. 6, 10; xxvi. 11, 16; 2 S. i. 14, 16.

Psalter.¹ But the word is never used absolutely as a name ; it is always a title of honour, and similarly it never stands by itself, but always occurs in combination with Jehovah, appearing as the anointed of Jehovah, my anointed, thy anointed, etc. The word is not to be taken as a mere reminiscence of the fact that at their inauguration the kings were solemnly anointed with holy oil,² but rather as embodying the religious character which the solemn unction was intended to convey. The person of the anointed of Jehovah became inviolate. To injure him in any way was to insult Jehovah Himself.³

Now from this meaning of the word we may note two derivative uses :

(i.) Deutero-Isaiah is able to apply the word to Cyrus, as one raised up and preserved by God. *Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have holden.*⁴

(ii.) The Psalmist calls the patriarchs by this honourable title. *Touch not mine anointed and do my prophets no harm.*⁵

though in either case there was no outward ceremony of anointing with oil.

2. The title was also applied to the priest, in virtue of his consecration.

¹ (ii. 2) xviii. 51; xx. 6; (xxviii. 8); lxxxiv. 9; (lxxxix. 38); cxxxii. 17.

² 1 S. x. 1; xvi. 13; 1 K. xix. 16; i. 45; 2 K. ix. 1-3; Ps. lxxxix. 20.

³ 2 S. i. 14-16; cf. 1 K. xxi. 10, 13.

⁴ Is. xlv. 1, the various readings *Κυρίου* for *Κυρῷ* should be noted, as illustrating the tendency to combine *Χριστός* with *Κύριος*.

⁵ Ps. cv. 15.

Thus in Leviticus we find *the priest the anointed one* (הַכֹּהֵן הַמְּשִׁיחַ¹ and הַכֹּהֵן הַמְּשִׁיחַ תִּתְּקֵי²) and the same expression reappears as late as 2 Maccabees,³ Ἀριστοβούλῳ ὀντί ἀπὸ τοῦ τῶν Χριστῶν ἱερέων γένους.

3. That prophets were anointed can only be inferred from the passage where Elijah is commissioned to *anoint Elisha to be prophet in his room*.⁴ The narrative of Elisha's call, however, makes no mention of any such anointing. But it is the religious idea rather than the outward ceremonial that is of value, and this we find expressly recognized. *The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek* (וַיֵּן מְשִׁחָא אֲתִי יְהוָה רַגִּי).⁵ Here then we find the prophet's equipment with the Holy Spirit regarded as an anointing.⁶

4. But the word acquired a still more extended application.

When the nation was in exile, and the throne of David had passed away, hope became concentrated on the people of Jehovah rather than on the theocratic king. At first the fortunes of the two appear to have been identified,⁷ but after a while the people played the part and inherited the promises of the Davidic monarchy.⁸ Thus the name "anointed" became transferred from the king to the nation.

This seems to have found definite expression for the first time in the prayer of Habakkuk. After

¹ Lev. iv. 5.

² Lev. vi. 16 (E.V. 22).

³ 2 Macc. i. 10.

⁴ 1 K. xix. 16.

⁵ Is. lxi. 1.

⁶ Cf. Ps. cv. 15.

⁷ Cf. esp. Ps. lxxxix. 38, 39.

⁸ Is. lv. 3.

describing the theophany, the poet proceeds to narrate its object :

*Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people,
Even to save thine anointed.*¹

and it is highly probable that the title refers to the people in Ps. xxviii., where we read *The Lord is a strength unto his people, and he is a stronghold of salvation to his anointed.*²

5. Was the title ever applied to the person of the coming king? This depends on the answer we give to two passages :

(i.) The second Psalm appears originally to have been connected to the first,³ and to have been prefixed to the whole Psalter, as a kind of preface. The language seems to fit in most easily with the hypothesis of its late date, and the whole Psalm admits of a very satisfactory explanation if we suppose that it was written with the definite intention of adding to the Psalter a direct reference to the person and authority of the Messianic King.

Of course the Psalmist may have a definite historical king, as he undoubtedly has a definite historical situation, in his mind ; the only difference that would result, were this the case, would be to make the Psalm indirectly, instead of directly, Messianic.

Let us now notice the main features of the Psalm :

The King is called the Anointed of Jehovah (עַל-יְהוָה עֶלְמִשִּׁיחוֹ).

¹ Hab. iii. 14.

² Ps. xxviii. 8, reading with LXX, Vulg., Syr. לָמַד for לְמַד, which is grammatically unsound.

³ Cf. Acts xiii. 33, text of D.

He is appointed king in Zion by Divine decree ;
 Jehovah adopts him for His son,
 And gives him the promise of universal dominion.

Now, whatever may have been the intention of the original author, the psalm was already quoted as directly Messianic in the Psalms of Solomon.

ἴδε Κύριε καὶ ἀνάστησον αὐτοῖς τὸν βασιλέα αὐτῶν, υἱὸν
 Δαυεὶδ,

εἰς τὸν καιρὸν ὃν ἴδες σὺ ὁ θεός

τοῦ βασιλεῦσαι ἐπὶ Ἰσραὴλ παῖδά σου,

καὶ ὑπόζωσον αὐτὸν ἰσχὺν τοῦ θραῦσαι ἄρχοντας ἀδίκους.¹

But this reference cannot be called decisive. The most we can say is, that "His Anointed" *may* have been used in this Psalm as a title for Messiah.

(ii.) We must next consider the famous passage in Daniel : *From the going forth of the commandment to restore and build Jerusalem unto the anointed one, the prince, shall be seven weeks; and three score and two weeks it shall be built again. . . . And after that, shall the anointed one be cut off and shall have nothing, and the people of the prince that shall come shall destroy the city and the sanctuary.*²

The Hebrew has עֲדָ-מָשִׁיחַ נָגִיד and נִפְרָת מָשִׁיחַ וַיָּחֵן כִּי. It used to be generally supposed that this passage was a direct prediction of the death of Christ, and the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. But the prophet can hardly have intended an immediate reference to that distant event; besides which, this view labours under chronological difficulties so serious as to be practically insurmountable. We should, therefore, most probably be right in giving up the rendering *the Messiah*, and adopting

¹ Ps. Sol. xvii. 23, 24.

² Dan. ix. 24-26.

that of R.V. margin, *an anointed one, a prince*. No explanation is free from very serious difficulty, but there is much to be said for identifying the first *anointed one* with Joshua, the high priest of the Restoration, who figures so prominently in the visions of Zechariah, and the second anointed one with Onias III., deposed from the High Priesthood in 175, and murdered in 171. If this view is correct, we have here another example of the old use of משיח in connection with the priestly dignity.

There can, however, be no doubt that the author looked for the inauguration of the Messianic era immediately after the removal of Antiochus, and the use of משיח absolutely in this connection would greatly have facilitated its direct application to the ideal ruler who should preside over the incoming kingdom of God.

We have now dealt with the use of the title in the Old Testament, and the results of our investigation may be briefly summarized as follows :

(i.) The title denotes Divine consecration or appointment to an office.

(ii.) It further connotes the idea of Divine protection.

(iii.) By its applicability to king, priest, and prophet it *prepared the way* for the union of all these offices in a single person.

(iv.) By its generally wide and somewhat indefinite connotation, the term admitted the inclusion of other conceptions, not obviously related to those above discussed, within the circle of the Messianic hope.

It will, in conclusion, be our task to examine these other conceptions which prepared the way for Christ and Christianity.

Now there are three titles which became, as it were, appropriated to the Messiah. The first was *The Son of David*. We have carefully examined the passages which gave rise to the currency of this expression, and we came to the conclusion that it was Davidic *character* rather than Davidic *origin* on which the prophets laid especial stress ; and that while in later times it became generally assumed that the Messiah would be at least closely connected with David's dynasty, and sit upon David's throne, yet the earlier representations of this ideal ruler are expressed in language which on the whole seems inconsistent with a dogmatic belief in the Davidic descent.

The second was *The Son of God*. We have seen that the theocratic king might be regarded as the Son of Jehovah, and we have noticed the remarkable distinction between the Hebrew and the heathen conceptions of this Divine sonship, for while in the latter it is attributed to physical descent, in the former it is a moral relation, based upon the elective and protective love of Jehovah, and involving the duties of filial devotion and obedience on the part of the anointed king of Israel. The title of *Jehovah's son* was recognized as an official designation of the head of the Theocracy. It was not so much a personal as an official sonship, to which the title originally referred. If we bear this in mind we shall understand the emphatic language sometimes employed to describe those who were Jehovah's earthly representatives in the administration of justice. We will

take an instance from the Psalter. Psalm lxxxii. is an imaginative description of the arraignment of the corrupt judges of Israel before Jehovah, who is no less the Judge of judges than He is the King of kings.¹

He pronounces sentence upon them for their injustice and partiality and inhumanity.

*I said: Ye are gods,
And all of you sons of the Most High.
Nevertheless ye shall die like (common) men
And fall like one of the princes.*²

The Hebrew is peculiarly emphatic, **יְהִי אֱלֹהִים**. It was upon the Divine declaration that their claim to be gods was based.³ I said: *Ye are gods*. The words plainly do not refer to their own essential nature,⁴ but to the lofty nature of the office which they were privileged to hold, for the judge at the sanctuary was as God to Israel.⁵ But we must not underrate the significance of such language. It implied that man could so perfectly represent

¹ Two other interpretations of this Psalm deserve mention. It is also referred to *the angels* (but the idea of angels *dying like men* is equally foreign to Judaism and Parseism) and to *foreign rulers*. To the present writer the parallel of Is. iii. 13-15 seems absolutely convincing, in favour of taking the words in the sense which is attached to them above.

² Ps. lxxxii. 6, 7.

³ Compare the similar emphasis on the personal pronoun in Ps. ii. 6, 7:

וְאֲנִי נִסְכַּחַתִּי מֶלֶךְ
אֲנִי הַיּוֹם יִלְדֶּחֶךָ

⁴ This seems excluded by the following sentence, **אֲכֵן כְּאָדָם הַמּוֹתוֹן**, i.e. despite their high standing and prerogatives they should meet the fate of ordinary men. *v. als.*

Cf. Ex. xxi. 6; xxii. 8, 9; 1 S. ii. 25.

God among men that they might themselves be called *gods and sons of the Most High*. "Such a phrase as that in the Psalm really includes in a most significant shape the thought which underlies the whole of the Old Testament, that of a covenant between God and man, which through the reality of a personal relationship assumes the possibility of a vital union. Judaism was not a system of limited monotheism, but a theism always tending to theanthropism, to a real union of God and man."¹

But the expression had begun to assume a deep significance in quite another direction. As early as Gen. vi. 2 we hear of *sons of God*,² a phrase, which in accordance with its invariable meaning elsewhere in Old Testament,³ must signify the angels.⁴ We thus meet with the phrase *sons of God* used in a metaphysical sense to denote beings of a higher and more heavenly nature than that of man. In one passage it occurs in the singular. Nebuchadnezzar, looking into the fiery furnace into which he had cast the three children, saw *four men walking, and the form of the fourth was as a son of God*,⁵ that is, a mysterious superhuman figure. The expression *υἱὸς θεοῦ* might

¹ Westcott, *St. John*, p. 160. ² בני האלהים.

³ Job. i. 6, ii. 1; xxxviii. 7; Ps. xxix. 1; lxxxix. 6 (in the two latter אֱלִים). בני ה' is never used.

⁴ So Dillmann and Delitzsch. The ancient versions deserve particular attention. LXX has *οἱ ἄγγελοι τοῦ θεοῦ* in 2, and *οἱ υἱοὶ τοῦ θεοῦ* in 6. Symmachus following Jewish exegesis *οἱ υἱοὶ τῶν δυναστευόντων*, cf. Targ. בני רבביא. Syr. has a mere transliteration, **ܒܢܝ ܕܥܠܡܝܐ** so also in Job, where LXX, *ἄγγελοι*, cf. Itala, angeli, but Vulgate, filii Dei.

⁵ Dan. iii. 25, **ܒܢܝ ܕܥܠܡܝܐ** explained in 28 by **ܡܠܐܬܬܐ**.

therefore have a metaphysical as well as a theocratic and theanthropic significance.¹

We now come to the last of these three titles—*the Son of Man*. To understand it aright we must go back to the earliest narratives in Genesis. The whole of the creation verged towards man. He was made in the image of God, as the crowning work of God's creation. To him was given *dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle and over all that creepeth upon the earth*² This dominion however was forfeited by sin. Man was driven out of the garden of Eden, but his true position was not suffered to be forgotten. God probed the sin to the bottom, and thus addressed Eve and the Serpent :

*I will put enmity between thee and the woman,
And between her seed and thy seed :
It shall bruise thy head,
And thou shalt bruise his heel.*³

This promise has been called the Prot-evangelium, and the title is not misplaced. We have here a prediction of the endless conflict of man with the powers of darkness and evil, and also the assurance that in the end the victory will remain with man. As to how, when, or by whom this battle will be fought and won, our text is absolutely silent ; but it is worthy of a place beside the greatest prophecies, for it confronts the sad fact of the fall with the triumphant assertion that in the age-long struggle that will ensue, humanity will in the end emerge victorious.

¹ Cf. esp. Mk. xv. 40, Mt. xxvii. 54, in the mouth of the Roman (heathen) centurion. St. Luke accurately paraphrases the *υἱὸς θεοῦ* of the two earlier evangelists by *δίκαιος*, Lk. xxiii. 47.

² Gen. i. 26.

³ Gen. iii. 15.

We next come to Psalm viii., which is a beautiful meditation on the glory of Jehovah revealed in the magnificence of nature, but even more fully in His infinite condescension to frail, weak man. The Psalmist reflects on His daily visitations and providences :

*What is man that thou art mindful of him,
And the son of man that thou visitest him ?*

He recollects the glorious destiny of man as made in the image of God, defaced maybe, but not destroyed :

*For thou hast made him but a little lower than God,
And crownest him with glory and honour.*

He remembers the promise of universal dominion, temporarily suspended perhaps, but not abrogated eternally :

*Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy
hands,
Thou hast put all things under his feet.*

And he bursts forth into a cry of grateful adoration :

*O Lord, our Governor, how excellent is thy name in all
the earth.*¹

This Psalm is intensely significant. It appears to have been widely read and known.² It clothed with all the beauty of poetic imagery the early records of man's high dignity and destiny. It refused to recognize man's disobedience as permanently invalidating the Divine purpose of love, and thus it is virtually a prophecy of the restoration and redemption of humanity.

¹ Ps. viii. 5, 6, 7, 10.

² It will be sufficient to point to the bitter irony with which the fifth verse is quoted in Job x. 12.

In this connection we need not do more than refer to the passage in Isaiah, which was long supposed to include a definite reference to a human Messiah :

*Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness and princes
shall rule in judgment,
And a man shall be as a hiding-place from the wind
And a covert from the tempest ;
As rivers of water in a dry place,
As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*¹

The Hebrew **וְהָיָה אִישׁ** admits of only one possible construction. It must mean *and every one of the princes shall be as a hiding place*, etc. To attach any other meaning to the words, especially to suppose that they refer to some particular "man," is grammatically impossible.

We next meet with the words *Son of man* as the constant designation of Ezekiel. Nor is it hard to see why Ezekiel chose the term to express his own relation to God. The Psalmist had already used *Son of man* to denote the weakness and frailty of man in comparison with the heavens over which Jehovah's glory was spread ; and Ezekiel was specially impressed with the sense of Jehovah's awful holiness. He felt himself a weak, sinful man ; he saw in humility the crowning virtue of man to God-ward, and just as he falls upon his face when he hears the Divine voice speaking to him and needs the help of the spirit to set him on his feet again,² so at the beginning of all his oracles he places the words *Son of man*, to be a constant reminder to his hearers as to himself of his weakness and mortality and creaturely dependence upon the Lord.

¹ Is. xxxii. 1, 2.

² Ezekiel i. 28-ii. 2.

Hitherto we have seen nothing essentially Messianic in the use of the term, save, perhaps, its incidental application to restored humanity, but in Daniel we find it transformed, by one of those epoch-making revolutions in the world of thought, from a title, expressive of human frailty, into a directly Messianic designation. Daniel¹ sees emerging out of the sea (a recognized emblem of political inquietude) four beasts, which, being interpreted, are the Babylonian, Median, Persian, and Macedonian empires. They are termed *beasts* as having their basis in nothing but brute force. Then, in complete contrast to their ferocity, comes one from Heaven who is termed *a son of man*, i.e. a man—for this is the only reasonable explanation of the Aramaic פֶּבֶר אֱנוֹשׁ. To him is assigned an universal and eternal kingdom. Now that this is a figure for the world-embracing kingdom of Israel is clear from the fact that the *Son of man* (פֶּבֶר אֱנוֹשׁ) is later replaced by the *saints of the Most High* (קְדִישֵׁי אֱלֹהֵינֵן), and there can be no doubt that these are to be identified with Israel. But it was Israel as fulfilling its duty to humanity, Israel as truly theocratic and Messianic. We have seen, however, that it was the whole tendency of Jewish thought to combine all the glorious characteristics of Israel into one ideal figure in whom they should find their completest fulfilment. The language here also suggests such a personification. *One like a man* corresponds to the *Ancient of days*. So we are not surprised to learn that the passage soon acquired a personal conno-

¹ Dan. vii.

tation which, as far as we can see, was originally lacking. The expression *Son of man* after the time of Daniel came to denote something more than creaturely weakness, or even ideal humanity ; it suggested triumph and victory, and was immediately connected with the Messianic kingdom.

These, then, are the three official titles of Messiah—*Son of David*, *Son of God*, *Son of man*—all of which had their root deeply embedded in the language and institutions of the Old Testament.

But there are yet a few more passages where the Messiah seems to be alluded to, though by none of these names. We allude in the first instance to the so-called *Blessing of Jacob*, which in all probability is the oldest portion of Genesis :

*Judah, thee shall thy brethren praise,¹
 Judah is a lion's whelp.
 The sceptre shall not depart from Judah,
 Nor the ruler's staff from between his feet,
 Until he come whose it is,
 And unto him shall the obedience of the peoples be.²*

The words which A.V. and R.V. render *until Shiloh come*, *עַד בִּי יָבֵא שְׁלֹה*, seem incapable of any certain interpretation.

There are most serious philological difficulties in the way of taking Shiloh as a proper name ; moreover, the word does not suggest any of those religious associations which are connected with *שָׁלוֹם*, *peace*, for *שְׁלֹה* has at the most a passive sense,

¹ The name *יְהוּדָה* suggests the blessing *יְהוּדָה*. Cf. Rom. ii. 29, where *ὁ ἑπαίνος* undoubtedly contains a reference to the preceding *ὁ ἐν τῷ κρυπτῷ Ἰουδαίος*.

² Gen. xlix. 8-10.

and is frequently used of *careless ease*; no other passage of the Old Testament ever alludes to Shiloh as a proper personal name, and the reference of this name to Messiah occurs first in a somewhat late passage of the Talmud.

Under these circumstances we should prefer the translation *Until he come to Shiloh*. The verses might then be understood of the supremacy of Judah. It was the first tribe to march into the wilderness;¹ it was the first to proceed to the conquest of Canaan;² it was the first to receive its share of conquered territory.³ Shiloh was not unimportant for the Israelites, as it marked the termination of their wanderings; while Judah's pre-eminence over the nations was established by David and spiritualized by the prophets. But there are several objections to this view. The phrase *until* עַד כִּי would at any rate seem to suggest that after the event alluded to, Judah's pre-eminence would cease, and the whole drift of the passage suggests most forcibly that it is royalty rather than supremacy which is promised to Judah.

We must therefore seek for a more satisfactory explanation. This we shall find with the help of the versions. They are almost unanimous in taking Shiloh as equivalent to a poetical but late (?) form of relative sentence (אֲשֶׁר-לִי = שָׁמָּה = שָׁנָה).⁴

Now, that this is the right rendering seems almost certain from a passage in Ezekiel where he apparently alludes to this very verse, in a strongly Messianic passage:

¹ Numb. x. 4.

² Judg. i. 2.

³ Josh. xv.

⁴ See additional note at the end of this chapter.

Thus saith the Lord God concerning the deadly wounded wicked prince of Israel:

Remove the mitre and take off the crown,

This shall be no more the same:

Exalt that which is low and abase that which is high:

An overthrow, an overthrow, an overthrow will I make it:

This also shall be no more

Until he come whose right it is:

And I will give it him.¹

We can see from a glance at the Hebrew עַד בֶּן אֲשֶׁר לִי הַמִּשְׁפָּט that Ezekiel had the earlier prophecy in his mind; and we therefore feel justified in interpreting the passage in *the Blessing of Jacob* in the same sense.

When we consider the extremely early date of the latter passage, it is more than ever remarkable that we should find the vague hope of Gen. iii. 15 so precisely defined. The selection of Judah as the royal tribe, the appearance of a mysterious personality in whom this regal pre-eminence should culminate, the relation of the heathen to the kingdom he should found—ideas which exercised so profound and permanent an influence on subsequent prophecy—all find distinct expression in the passage before us, which affords the most striking evidence of the wonderfully early date at which such hopes and ideals were prevalent in Israel.

The next passage for our consideration occurs in the fourth oracle of Balaam:

I see him, but not now;

I behold him, but not near.

A star hath arisen out of Jacob,

¹ Ezekiel xxi. 25-27.

*And a sceptre is established in Israel;
And he smites through the temples of Moab.¹*

The prophetic perfect is used throughout, and the seer's vision is of the future. He had already described Israel as happy and prosperous under her Divine king.

*Jehovah his God is with him
And the shout of a king is among them.²*

He had also spoken words of high hope for the Hebrew monarchy :

*Let his king be higher than Agag,
And let his kingdom be exalted.³*

He now predicts that Israel under her king will not merely threaten but utterly destroy Moab. The passage can hardly be regarded as directly Messianic. It deals with the future, it is true ; but the reference to the activity of Israel's king is strictly limited to the destruction of Moab, and perhaps of Edom. Nevertheless it appears to have acquired a Messianic significance among the Jews, for this interpretation appears in the Targum of Onkelos, and underlies the title of " Bar-kokhba " (son of the star) given to the Messianic impostor in the days of Hadrian. The LXX mistranslations may not have been without effect in giving colour to this view of the passage.⁴ But it is especially noticeable that the passage is not quoted by St. Matthew in that connection in which it would have appeared most appropriate.⁵

¹ Numb. xxiv. 17.

² xxiii. 21. This from the context probably refers to God. Cf. I S. iv. 5.

³ xxiv. 7.

⁴ ἄνθρωπος ἐξελεύσεται.

⁵ Mt. ii. 2, 9.

We now turn to the famous prophecy of Immanuel. The passage is of such importance, and has been the subject of so much controversy, that it will be best to quote it at length :

And the Lord spake again to Ahaz, saying, (11) Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God: ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. (12) But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord. (13) And he said, Hear ye now, O house of David: is it a small thing for you to weary men, that ye will weary my God also? (14) Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign: behold a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel. (15) Butter and honey shall he eat, when he knoweth to refuse the evil, and choose the good. (16) For before the child shall know to refuse the evil and choose the good, the land (whose two kings thou abhorrest) shall be forsaken. (17) The Lord shall bring upon thee, and upon thy people, and upon thy father's house, days that have not come, from the day that Ephraim departed from Judah: even the king of Assyria.¹

Now, the question as to the original meaning of these words is not to be settled by an appeal to the use made of them by St. Matthew. For apart from the fact that an event, which would not take place till more than seven hundred years had elapsed, could not possibly be regarded as "a sign" for Ahaz, and that the language, moreover (תִּנִּיחַ הָרְאָה), suggests its fulfilment in the immediate future, the citation in the first Gospel can no more decide the primary historical significance

¹ Is. vii. 10-17.

of this prediction than Mt. ii. 15 decides that of Hos. xi. 1. It can only be decided by its application to the historical circumstances of the time.

Isaiah was seeking to dissuade Ahaz from his faithless policy of calling in Assyrian assistance to repel the Syro-Ephraimite invasion; and to strengthen the king's weak faith he offers in the name of Jehovah to grant him a sign of the most tremendous character. Ahaz may choose for himself—going deep down to Sheol, or mounting high above. Ahaz rejects Jehovah's offer on a pretext of piety. He could not think of putting Jehovah to the test. The real motive of his refusal is obvious. It is not that he feels the impossibility of the sign; on the contrary, he is convinced of Jehovah's ability to perform what He has offered through the prophet. But the king had already committed himself to the Assyrian alliance, and he did not wish to be driven against his will to the hopeless policy, as it appeared to him, of confidence in God. Isaiah's wrath is kindled at this paltry subterfuge, and in words of hot anger he asks if Ahaz thinks it too little to weary the prophet himself, that he must needs weary the prophet's God also. Ahaz had refused a sign offered in grace; God would give him one in His wrath.

The sign, therefore, must be regarded as a threat. Does it also contain a promise? This depends upon the significance we attach to the birth of the child, and the name then given to him. But before we proceed, we must examine certain critical difficulties connected with verses 15 and 16, on the solution of which our answer will very largely depend.

Even the casual reader must notice the very peculiar position of the latter verse. Immanuel is born (14). The land is reduced to the sorest straits¹ by the time He has grown to years of discretion (15). For before he has attained to years of discretion the Syro-Ephraimitish confederacy shall be entirely overthrown (16). Jehovah shall bring upon Judah days of horror, even the king of Assyria (17). It must be plain that the insertion of verse 16 between 15 and 17, which both contain the most uncompromising assertions of impending judgment, is entirely at variance with the context in which it finds its present place.

Two solutions have been proposed: (1) Duhm, who regards the whole passage as one of promise, eliminates 15 altogether. But this proposal is in violent contradiction to the whole tenor of the oracle, which, as we have seen, must contain the idea of threatening as well as of promise.²

(2) The other explanation proceeds on the assumption of a textual corruption in 16 *b*. It is urged that the whole context now speaks of threatening, which is disturbed by the insertion of this promise. It is therefore proposed to delete

¹ *Butter and honey* conveys a very different meaning to *Milk and honey*. While the latter denotes prosperity and plenty, the former refers to the scanty fare with which, owing to foreign invasion and the consequent cessation of all agriculture, the impoverished people have to be content.

² Though it is possible to regard 17-25 as a separate oracle delivered on a widely different occasion, a more natural exegesis would connect 17 with what precedes, and would regard 18-25 (cf. other parts of the chapter) as detached fragments of other Assyrian prophecies. If this be so, it is clearly fatal to Duhm's hypothesis.

the words *before whose two kings thou quakest* (אֲשֶׁר אָתָּה קָץ מִפְּנֵי שְׁנֵי מְלָכֶיהָ) and take the expression *the land shall be forsaken* as applying to Judah. This view receives some grammatical confirmation from the singular number employed—*the land shall be forsaken*—(תִּשָּׁבֵב הָאֲדָמָה), which would certainly be a strange expression for describing the countries of the two kings. But even so, why is the child's infancy placed after his manhood?

There appears to be a much simpler way of avoiding all difficulties, though it does not seem to have occurred to any commentators. The transposition of verses 16 and 15 would not only remove all difficulties, but also result in making the whole passage far more coherent and intelligible.

The child shall be called Immanuel, for :

In his infancy (i.e. in yet a few years) Syria and Ephraim shall be destroyed.

In his youth or manhood the land of Judah will be laid bare by the Assyrian armies.

This gives us the logical and the temporal sequence, both of which are conspicuously lacking in the present arrangement. The child's birth and name constitute at once a promise and a threat. Just as the child born in Israel's darkest hour received the sad name of *Ichabod, where is the glory?* so the birth of this child at the moment of Israel's triumph will result in his being named *Immanuel, God is with us*. His birth will be a sign to Ahaz that the prophet has spoken truly; but it will remind him not only of Isaiah's predictions of victory, but also of his denunciation of doom. For the child's history does not end with his birth. He

has a life to live ; and his youth will be spent amid all the signs of misery and desolation in which the sin of Ahaz has involved his country. Immanuel, the inheritor of a glorious name, the pledge of Jehovah's power and presence among His people, the very child of promise, grows up to manhood to find all the fair prospects of his early years blighted and ruined by the sin and folly of others. He shares with the afflicted people their poverty and distress : but his name remains a ground for confidence in the ultimate victory of the people of God.

But who is this Immanuel ? And who his mother ? It is quite possible that we are now asking a question which Isaiah himself might not have cared to answer. The emphasis lies not on the personality, but on the name and history of the child. Why then is his mother mentioned ? We cannot tell. It may be that Isaiah simply wished to describe the birth of the child, and that he expressed himself by this poetical circumlocution. It may be that in the original text the mother herself was addressed. It may be that he took any young woman as an example of the birth pangs through which the nation must pass before it reached complete deliverance. It may be that Isaiah purposely used the phrase in order to dissociate the coming child, whose name should be the emblem of Israel's victory and Jehovah's love, from the house of David which had fallen so grievously. There are but two things that are certain :

(1) Negatively: The word employed, עַלְמָה, though occasionally used to denote a virgin, does not necessarily connote virginity ; in fact it is used most frequently of any young woman of marriageable age ;

and it is impossible that an idea so far transcending all human thought as the conception of a Virgin birth should be dismissed in a single word.

(2) Positively : Attention is mainly concentrated on the child, rather than on the mother ; though it must be admitted that the mysterious language used to describe his birth suggests that he will be no ordinary character.

Immanuel has been finely characterized as "a type of innocent suffering. Born to an empty title, his name is the vestige of a great opportunity, the ironical monument of an irreparable crime."¹ But is this all ? We can hardly think so. Chapters vii. to ix. 7 form a single whole ; their various parts are but the different acts of the great drama of national sin and national salvation. This passage cannot be dissociated from viii. 8 : *thy land, O Immanuel* : or from the remarkable fact that it is the birth of a child that forms the chiefest ground for exultation in the Messianic age.² No one has disputed the Messianic reference in the last passage. The son born, the child given, is the Messiah ; when then did Isaiah first conceive this idea ? We must not of course rely too greatly upon presumptions of probability, but we can hardly deny that the most likely moment for this belief to have flashed across the prophet's mind was when, face to face with the weak and faithless occupant of David's throne, he realized that he could put no hope in the present, that his ideals must be projected into the future, that the zeal of the Lord of hosts would yet bring it to pass, that

¹ G. A. Smith, p. 118. ² Is. ix. 6, *They joy before thee as the joy in harvest . . . for a son is born unto us, etc.*

a child should arise whose name would assure the people of Divine protection, and who, after he had suffered a little, would be the more worthy to sit on David's seat and take the government upon his shoulder.

Immanuel may therefore be identified with the Messiah, but it must not be denied that there are many difficulties in the way of this identification—in particular, perhaps, the fact that the birth of the two “children” as well as their history appears to presuppose a different time and different surroundings.¹ Of one thing, however, we may be certain. It is impossible to evacuate the birth and name of Immanuel of all Messianic significance. If not the Messiah himself, he is at least the leader and embodiment of that new generation from the midst of which Messiah should finally spring. It is idle to bring against this view the fact that his appearance was expected to synchronize with the Assyrian invasion, and that it did not do so. In this sense all prophecy was unfulfilled. The prophets saw only so much of the Kingdom of God as was necessary to bring their message into actual connection with their own times; and what they saw, they declared. The hope continued to live, even though its immediate realization might be postponed and its form altered. Of the times and the seasons *knoweth no man, but only the Father, who hath set them within his own authority.*²

¹ We must not, however, look for strict logical coherence in the prophets.

² Mk. xiii. 32, Acts i. 7. If Immanuel is not the kingly child born in Chapter ix.—though we must admit that this seems, perhaps, the most

There is yet one more title which came to be used as a title for Messiah—though at first it appears to have been absolutely destitute of any personal significance. We refer to the use of the word *Stone*, which, as applied to Christ, assumed quite a remarkable prominence in apostolic and early Christian literature.

The phrase originated with Isaiah. He is warned *not to walk in the way of this people*:

*Neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid.
Jehovah of hosts shall ye count holy,
And let him be your fear and your terror;
And he shall be for a sanctuary (to you),
But for a stone of stumbling and for a rock of offence to
both the houses of Israel.*¹

Now, with this passage must be compared the prophet's words in a later chapter:

*Thus saith the Lord God:
Behold I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone,
A tried stone, a precious corner stone, of sure foundation.
He that believeth shall not make haste.*²

likely interpretation—we can with confidence accept the exegesis of Dillmann: “Eine neue Generation (שִׁרְיָה, vi. 13) muss jetzt heranwachsen, muss die Strafleiden der Assyrischen Züchtigung und die tiefste Erniedrung des Volkes und Landes mit durchleben, bis endlich nach Zertrümmerung der Heiden-macht das neue Gottgefällige Reich errichtet werden kann, ix. 1-6. Der Immanuel, durch seinen Namen ein Unterpfand dafür das Gott mit seinem Volke sei, ist der Vertreter dieses durch die Gerichte gebesserten Geschlechts aus dem schliesslich das Haupt des neuen Reichs hervorgeht: für Ahaz und seinem Hof das Zeichen seiner Verwerfung.”

¹ Is. viii. 14.

² xxviii. 16.

In both places the idea is probably derived from the huge stones which had been used in the construction of the temple; but while in the first reference, Jehovah Himself is the stone, in the latter He plainly is not, for it is He that lays it. Hort suggests that "By the stone Isaiah probably meant the Divine king or kingdom of Israel founded in David, the true strength and bond of the nation resting securely on the promise of Jehovah, and alone capable of holding together the elements of the people in opposition to the forces tending to draw them asunder."¹ But the context makes it extremely doubtful whether Isaiah had any such idea in his mind. He is speaking of the vain confidence of the politicians in the Egyptian alliance. He tells them that when the overflowing storm will at last break upon them, all their intrigues shall be utterly swept away. It is only by faith in God's providence and power that a man *shall not make haste*. It is therefore most probable that the preceding words do not allude to any outward institution, but are merely intended to express the source from which hope alone could be derived, the unalterable and indestructible purpose of God. This purpose had already received a partial realization in Jehovah's choice of Israel and Zion. It was to be realized yet more perfectly in the Incarnate Word; but this was hidden from Isaiah's eyes.

The next passage to be considered is from Zechariah. The prophet has seen in his vision the cleansing of Joshua the high priest, and his

¹ Hort, *Ep. St. Pet.* p. 117.

investment with the robes of his priestly office. He tells him that he and his fellows are a sign that God will yet bring forth His Servant the Branch.

*For behold, the stone that I have set before Joshua —upon one stone are seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of the land in one day.*¹

All manner of explanations have been given of the stone to which allusion is here made, but the simplest appears to be that adopted by Nowack, who refers to a remarkable parallel presented by an account of the inauguration of a priest of Nebo at Borsippa. It is preserved on a black stone, convex on both sides, containing figures of all the gods who made it their special concern to see that this consecration to the priesthood shall remain inviolable. This is followed by an inscription, underneath which appear sun, moon, and seven eyes, plainly intended to represent the seven planets. The inscription runs somewhat as follows: "The goddess Nana, whose sentence is unalterable, and the god He, the mighty one that watcheth over the Temple, beheld with their gracious favour Nabumatakkil, and led him into the inmost sanctuary of Nebo at Borsippa; and that none might contend with him concerning his appointment to the same, they sealed the same and delivered it to him for ever."²

If, as seems most likely, this suggests the correct interpretation of the Scriptural passage, we have here another illustration of the unchangeable purpose of God, and this in connection with the Messianic expectation, with which the expression subsequently

¹ Zech. iii. 8, 9.

² Nowack, *H.K.* p. 356.

always stood in the closest association. This is very clearly seen in the use made of this idea by Daniel.

He reminds the king of his dream—the great image composed of all manner of different materials. *Thou sawest till a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet, which were of iron and clay, and brake them in pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold broken in pieces together . . . and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain and filled the whole earth.* The interpretation follows immediately—the image represents the heterogeneous elements of the unwieldy Babylonian empire. But these shall all be broken in pieces, *for the God of heaven shall set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and the kingdom shall not be left to another people, but it shall break in pieces and destroy all those kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever.*¹

Here then the Messianic kingdom is indubitably portrayed as a stone from heaven which should destroy the kingdoms of the world.

The last instance of the use of the word in this connection occurs in the Psalter :

The same stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner :

*From the Lord is this and it is marvellous in our eyes.*²

Whether the Psalm be referred to the Babylonian or, as seems more likely, to the Maccabean period, there can be no doubt whatever as to the interpretation of the passage. The proud empires engaged in building up the fabric of universal history had

¹ Dan. ii. 31-45.

² Ps. cxviii. 22, 23.

ignored or cast aside little Israel, which should yet become the central factor in the religious development of the human race, by virtue of its unique vocation to witness to the true God. We can see how natural and easy would be the transference of these words to the Messiah, Israel's highest representative, who should succeed where Israel failed.

We have examined all the passages where *the stone* may be considered to have a Messianic reference, and we have seen that while these passages, generally speaking, may be said to be Messianic, yet we nowhere have an instance of the application of the term to the personal Messiah, though the language is peculiarly fitted to suggest, and even facilitate, such an interpretation.

There is in conclusion one important point with regard to Messiah's work which deserves consideration. It is sometimes said that he has no share in the work of salvation, but merely constitutes an additional blessing for the redeemed people.¹ This view is true in a very large number of cases. Thus in Is. ix. the prince is born after Jehovah Himself has broken the power of Assyria, and in Zech. ix. the Messianic king rides into Jerusalem in peace, while it is God who will cut off chariot, horse, and battle bow. But in the Psalter, at any rate, the king is admitted to an active share in Jehovah's work of annihilating all that oppose themselves to his rule, and a similar conception appears in Mic. v.

¹ Thus Dalman quotes with approval the words of Castelli: "In nessun luogo del vecchio Testamento appare il Messia come l'operatore egli stesso della redenzione in forza di virtù sua propria. Il vero redentore è Dio—il Messia è il nuovo re del popolo redento."

So that while it is true to say that Jehovah Himself is the Redeemer and Saviour of His people, yet we are not justified in asserting that Scripture excludes the Messiah from all part and lot in the Divine accomplishment of salvation.

Our examination of the more important passages of the Old Testament having a Messianic reference is now complete. What then is the Old Testament conception of the Messiah?

- (i.) He is *Son of David*—sitting upon David's throne and realizing the best points in David's character.
- (ii.) He is *Son of God* in a theocratic sense; but the use of this expression in a metaphysical connection at least prepared the way for a higher view of his nature.
- (iii.) He is *Son of Man*—the true representative of humanity, fulfilling its highest destiny, triumphing over its inherent weakness and frailty no less than over the powers of evil, and finally exalted to the side of God.
- (iv.) We have seen this belief originating in what must be considered the remotest period of Israel's history, and continually reappearing with added beauty and fresh significance at every stage of religious thought and national life.
- (v.) We have noted how the idea of suffering entered into the conception. The heel of him that bruised the serpent's head should itself be bruised. Immanuel shares the people's affliction before he rules them in glory.
- (vi.) The image of *the stone*, if destitute of a

personal Messianic reference, nevertheless denotes the changeless character of God's purpose of love, which finally led to the establishment of the Messianic kingdom through the appearance of Messiah himself.

- (vii.) The term was in itself wonderfully adapted to bring together into one harmonious whole all those ideas and conceptions which had grown up round the figures of Prophet, Priest, and King.

Here then we take our leave of Old Testament prophecy. No one could deny the power of its lofty idealism, or the surpassing beauty of its religious conceptions. But were those ideals ever to be realized, or those conceptions ever to be fulfilled? This is the question we shall now attempt to answer. We will only say that were it possible to imagine the Old Testament without the New, we should yet feel constrained to lay at the prophets' feet the tribute of our profoundest admiration; we should yet recognize that they were what they professed to be, the mouthpieces of God to their own generation. But that is not all. Christianity is a fact which refuses to be explained away. And if in Christianity we should find the expansion of prophets' doctrines, the realization of their hopes, the accomplishment of their ideals, the crown and consummation of all that they so passionately and yet so patiently longed for and strove after; if, in short, Christianity with its central Figure, human and Divine, Prophet, Priest, and King, is nothing less than the translation of prophecy from the region of ardent belief to that of actual fact, then we shall be able to grasp its true

significance, as used by God to *prepare the way* for that great event which He, *unto whom all his works are known from the beginning*, would bring about in the fulness of time; then we shall know that the men of old did but *prophecy in part until that which was perfect was come*; then we shall see the living and organic connection between the two Dispensations, and recognize that it is the same God who spake in both—in the first to prepare, in the second to accomplish; and recognizing this, we shall feel how immeasurably great is the argument to be derived from the evidential value of prophecy.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON GEN. XLIX. 10.

LXX has ἕως ἂν ἔλθῃ τὰ ἀποκειμένα αὐτῷ (v.l. ᾧ ἀποκείται) καὶ αὐτὸς προσδοκία ἐθνῶν.

The Syr. is almost exactly the same:

חַבְצֵלָן יִלְלֵנִי מֶלֶךְ יִיְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ שֶׁלֹּס נִסְבְּסֵה נִסְמַסְנֵה

cf. Onquelos: עַד הָיְיָ מְשִׁיחָא דְּדִלְיָה הָיָא בְּלִכְוִתָּא

רְלִיָּה יִשְׁמַעְיֵן עַמְּמִיָּא

Old Latin (as usual following LXX): *Donec veniat cui repositum est.*

Vulgate reads *qui mittendus est* = שְׁלִיחָה.

ADDITIONAL NOTE ON SOME INFLUENCES AT WORK IN THE INTERPRETATION OF PROPHECY AFTER THE CLOSE OF THE OLD TESTAMENT CANON.

The importance, from a religious point of view, of the age which intervened between the close of the Old Testament Dispensation and the inauguration of the New has been increasingly recognized of late years. We now propose to add a very brief note on its significance as a determining

factor on the history of prophecy and its interpretation. We will divide our subject into three parts, dealing with the influence of the Septuagint, the extra-canonical books, and Philo respectively in this direction.

I. The LXX was something more than a translation; it was, as indeed must be the case with every translation in a greater or lesser degree, a commentary on the original text. But in the LXX this was so to a very remarkable extent. The translators appear to have been influenced both by the Hellenic philosophy by which they were surrounded and by the system of Haggadic interpretation with which they were familiar.¹ Moreover, it soon acquired all the force of an authorized version; and we know from our own experience how hard it is for such authority to be overthrown. On whatever estimate we base our calculations, "the LXX is the principal source from which the writers of the New Testament derived their Old Testament quotations."²

We will now give instances in which this version may be said to have affected the use of the New Testament allusions to the prophetic writers. It will be best to begin by citing a few passages where the significance of the phraseology may be regarded as purely accidental.

Thus in Zechariah iii. 1, iii. 8, vi. 11, we meet with Ἰησοῦς ὁ ἱερεὺς ὁ μέγας as a translation for יהושע הכהן הגדול. The translation here is faithful enough; but there can be no doubt that after the Ascension of Jesus, the words would have acquired a new significance, not only greatly facilitating the Messianic interpretation of Joshua's life and character, but very possibly suggesting the thought of the High Priesthood of Our Lord on which the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews lays such stress.³

¹This is very clearly brought out in two books by Frankel on the subject—*Vorstudien zu der Sept.* and *Über den Einfluss der palastinischen Exegese auf die alexandrinische Hermeneutik.*

²Swete, *Introduction to Study of LXX*, 392.

³Cf. especially Heb. iv. 14, ἀρχιερέα μέγαν . . . Ἰησοῦν, and x. 21, ἱερέα μέγαν ἐπὶ τὸν οἶκον τοῦ θεοῦ. Cf. Zech. iii. 7, 8.

In Zech. vi. 14, the coincidence rests on a curious mis-translation, ὁ στέφανος ἔσται τοῖς ὑπομένουσιν, where the LXX have attempted to translate the proper name סְטֵפָן (a somewhat common feature of their translation—cf. Ps. xcvi. 8).

Now, with this compare Epistle of James i. 12, Μακάριος ἄνθρωπος ὃς ὑπομένει πειρασμόν· ὅτι . . . λήψεται τὸν στέφανον τῆς ζωῆς, ὃν ἐπηγγείλατο τοῖς ἀγαπῶσιν αὐτόν. Cf. also Apoc. ii. 10. The references to *the crown* in the New Testament make it extremely likely that there was a saying of our Lord not recorded in the Gospels connecting perseverance with the gift of a crown. Cf. Mk. xiii. 13.

As a third instance, we may take the LXX translation of Is. vii. 14, where הַמְצֵנָה is rendered ἡ παρθένος. Apparently the translators intended by this expression to denote no more than that the maiden was at the time a virgin, but although we may admit that the Jews were right in insisting that ἡ νεάνις would have been a far more accurate translation, few Christian scholars would feel disposed to deny that the LXX rendering was in some sense providential. "It led men to anticipate the truth, or it made the truth when revealed more credible."¹

The employment of this passage by St. Matthew to substantiate the fact of the Virgin birth² suggests for our consideration the passages cited by St. Peter in corroboration of the resurrection of Christ and the descent of the Spirit,³ both of which are taken from the LXX, which here exhibits more than one very significant modification of the Hebrew, attributable, as we believe, to doctrinal rather than accidental causes.

The first passage is quoted from Joel iii. 1-5 (Heb.), ii. 28-32 (LXX). Now we have seen that it is *possible* that Joel did not contemplate the possibility of spiritual blessing beyond the confines of Israel—or, at any rate, that he left this part of

¹ Davidson, *O. T. Prophecy*, p. 359.

² St. Mt. i. 23.

³ Acts ii. 17-21, 25-28.

his eschatology purposely vague. But the LXX, under the universalistic influences of Alexandria, by a slight alteration very considerably enlarged the prophet's original conception.

Thus Joel iii. 2 runs in the Hebrew :

וְגַם עַל-הָעֲבָדִים וְעַל-הַשְּׁפָחוֹת . . . אֲשַׁפֵּךְ רוּחִי

The meaning clearly is that the Spirit will not be confined to any class within the theocracy. *Even servants and hand-maids* would share in the spiritual blessings of *those days*.

Now the LXX has καὶ (+ γε ^{N^{ca}cbA}) ἐπὶ τοὺς δούλους μου καὶ ἐπὶ τὰς δούλας μου κ.τ.λ.

The change, if slight, is important, for it implies that not only privileges of class but privileges of race will be abolished when Jehovah shall pour out His Spirit upon all flesh.

The second citation is from the xvth Psalm, which is expressly treated as prophecy. Cf. Acts ii. 30.

Now there can be really no doubt that in the original the Psalmist contemplates a deliverance, not a resurrection, from death. "It is not antithesis between life here and life hereafter, but between life with and life without God."

The translation of R.V. will make this plain:

*I have set the Lord alway before me:
Because he is at my right hand, I shall not be moved;
Therefore my heart is glad and my glory rejoiceth:
My flesh also shall dwell in safety.
For thou wilt not abandon my soul to Sheol,
Neither wilt Thou suffer thy Holy One to see the pit.*¹

The language plainly indicates that the Psalmist's confidence in God leads him to feel happy and secure from all fear of a premature death.

Now for the alteration of LXX, followed by St. Peter.

For יְהוָה שְׂיִרְתִּי it has προσορώμην; this adds an element of futurity to the Psalmist's vision. Cf. Acts ii. 31, προῖδὼν ἐλάλησεν ὅτι οὕτε ἐγκατελείφθη κ.τ.λ.

¹ Ps. xvi. 8-10.

For לְבָטָח very frequently="in security"; it has ἐπ' ἐλπίδι="The flesh will rest in hope." Here again we have a future rather than a present reference.

For לֹא תָעֹזב נַפְשִׁי לְשָׂאֵל, LXX οὐκ ἐγκαταλείψεις τὴν ψύχην μου εἰς ᾠδην. This, taken in conjunction with the foregoing expressions, at least suggests the thought of a rising from the grave (though it is difficult to see how the Hebrew could have been expressed differently), and this seems borne out by the use of διαφθορά to represent שָׁחַת (though this translation is also employed in LXX, Ps. ix. 16, xxix. 11. Cf. also Ez. xxi. 31, Dan. x. 8, מִשְׁחִית, and Prov. xxviii. 10, שָׁחִית, conj. שָׁחַת).

Enough has been said to show that the language of the Psalm as translated in the LXX (whether consciously influenced by the growing belief in a resurrection or not, we are unable to determine) implied the "hope" of a speedy and joyful rising from the grave, and thus prepared the way for its application to the Resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The value attached to the LXX by the Early Church was immense. Its readings and renderings were attributed to the highest form of inspiration. Thus Irenaeus says, "Unus et idem spiritus qui in prophetis quidem praeconavit quis et qualis adventus Domini, in senioribus (i.e. the LXX elders) interpretatus est bene quae prophetata fuerant, ipse et in Apostolis praedicavit."¹ We may smile at Irenaeus' exaggerated admiration for the faulty version; but the more study we bestow upon it, the more we shall find that not merely in its use of words and phrases, but even in its interpretative glosses, it was providentially fitted to "become the vehicle of a fuller revelation in the writings of the Apostolic age."²

II. The extra-canonical and apocryphal Jewish writings are mainly valuable for their definition of the Messianic hope.

- (i.) It is here that we first find the absolute use of the word Χριστός, Ps. (Sol.) xvii. 36, ὅτι πάντες ἅγιοι καὶ βασιλεὺς αὐτῶν Χριστὸς κύριος.

¹ Iren. iii. 21-4.

² Swete, *Intr. LXX*, 340.

- (ii.) The *Similitudes* of the Book of Enoch (circ. 90 B.C.) contain frequent allusions to the Son of Man in a directly Messianic sense, and we may also observe that he is further connected with the idea of righteousness. Cf. Jer. xx. 5.
- (iii.) In the same Book we have two other ideas of great importance. The first is the Divine election of Messiah.
- (iv.) The other consists in investing him with a supernatural character as the eternal ruler and judge of all the world.
- 4 (v.) In ~~Ezra~~ ^{iv.} the Messiah dies after a long and prosperous reign. It is indeed possible that, as far as people thought on the subject at all, he was often conceived as dying, but, as has been pointed out, the Jews no more alluded to his death than would an orator to that of any national hero who might be the subject of his panegyric. At any rate, such a death has nothing whatever in common with the idea of atonement.
- (vi.) Hints seem to be given of Messiah's pre-existence. Cf. ~~Ezra~~ ^{iv.} ~~12-14~~ ^{xix}, but it is very doubtful if this can be considered as a properly formulated doctrine, or indeed as having any relation to a personal pre-existence.
- (vii.) We may further notice how in the *Wisdom of Solomon* ii. iii. the conception of the Son and the Servant, and the description of His sufferings and death and immortality, are all combined to make a wonderful picture of the man after God's own heart.

His persecutors speak :

ἐνεδρεύσωμεν τὸν δίκαιον, ὅτι δύσχρηστος ἡμῖν ἐστίν
καὶ ἐναντιοῦται τοῖς ἔργοις ἡμῶν
καὶ ὀνειδίζει ἡμῖν ἁμαρτήματα νόμου
καὶ ἐπιφημίζει ἡμῖν ἁμαρτήματα παιδείας ἡμῶν·
ἐπαγγέλλεται γνῶσιν ἔχειν θεοῦ
καὶ παῖδα Κυρίου ἐαυτὸν ὀνομάζει . . .
μακαρίζει ἔσχατα δικαίων
καὶ ἀλαζονεύεται πατέρα θεόν.

ἴδωμεν εἰ οἱ λόγοι αὐτοῦ ἀληθεῖς
καὶ πειράσωμεν τὰ ἐν ἐκβάσει αὐτοῦ.
εἰ γὰρ ἔστιν ὁ δίκαιος υἱὸς θεοῦ, ἀντιλημψεται αὐτοῦ.

ὑβρεὶ καὶ βασάνῳ ἐτάσωμεν αὐτόν . . .
καὶ δικάσωμεν τὴν ἀνεξικακίαν αὐτοῦ.
θανάτῳ ἀσχήμονι καταδικάσωμεν,
ἔσται γὰρ αὐτοῦ ἐπισκοπὴ ἐκ λόγων αὐτοῦ.

καὶ οὐκ ἔγνωσαν μυστήρια αὐτοῦ . . .
οὐδὲ ἔκριναν γέρας ψυχῶν ἀμώμων
ὅτι ὁ θεὸς ἔκτισεν τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἐπ' ἀφθαρσίᾳ
καὶ εἰκόνα τῆς ἰδίας ἰδιότητος (? αἰδιότητος) ἐποίησεν αὐτόν.

δικαίων δὲ ψυχὰς ἐν χειρὶ θεοῦ
καὶ οὐ μὴ ᾤψεται αὐτῶν βάσανος.
ἔδοξαν ἐν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἀφρόνων τεθνάναι
καὶ ἐλογίσθη κάκωσις ἢ ἔξοδος αὐτῶν . . .
οἱ δὲ εἰσιν ἐν εἰρήνῃ.¹

"Before the historical realization in Jesus Christ, and apart from belief in Him, it must have been extremely difficult to combine the idea of suffering with the conceptions of the promised King derived from the representations of Old Testament prophecy generally. It can have been possible at all only for men of unusual depth of spiritual insight and sympathy with the sorrows of their people."² The passage which we have cited at length shows that there were some among those who waited for the consolation of Israel who could cherish the true ideal of the righteous yet persecuted Son of God.

The pre-Christian Messianic hope had a threefold origin.

(1) The sense of national failure.

(2) The degeneracy of the later Asmonean princes.

¹ Wisd. Sol. ii. 12-13, 16-20, 22-23, iii. 1-3.

² Stanton, Art. "Messiah," *H.B.D.* iii. 355a.

- (3) A deep religious belief in Jehovah's activity on behalf of His people—a re-action from and a protest against the scholasticism of the Scribes and the materialism of the Sadducees.”¹

We can see then how useful a purpose it fulfilled by keeping alive during those dreary years of misfortune and decay that preceded the coming of Christ, those ideals of deliverance and salvation which were foreshadowed in the Old Testament and fulfilled in the New.

III. It would take us much too far out of our present enquiry were we to attempt to give even a rough outline of Philo's theological position: we will merely indicate the two particulars in which his influence was most markedly impressed upon the Christian interpreters of the Old Testament.

(1) Convinced that for those who had eyes to see the sacred Scriptures contained the fulness of Divine revelation, he applied to the law that system of allegorical exegesis which afterwards was “adapted to the explanation of prophecy and of the New Testament itself.”² The defects of allegorism are plain and manifold; in particular, it opened the door to the wildest fancies of the imagination, but it had at least two good points:

(a) It was applied “not merely for the purpose of fanciful edification, but with the serious object of correcting the literal, mechanical hierarchical tendencies of the day.”²

(b) It had the still greater merit of clearly distinguishing between the letter and the spirit, between the literal and the religious sense of Holy Scripture; that is to say, the allegorists, while recognizing the original and historical meaning of any passage, were yet always on the watch for its higher and more permanent significance. It was this idea which made possible the application of prophecy to the facts and truths of Christianity.

(2) Philo saw the need of some religious centre round which all God's revelation should revolve. And this he found

¹ Chase, *Credibility of Acts*, p. 127.

² C. Bigg, *Christian Platonists*, 56, 57.

in the Logos, whom he dignified with an imposing array of honourable titles, many of which were subsequently applied by the apostles to Jesus Christ, in whom they recognized the Incarnation of the true Logos of the Father. There can be no question that Philo's doctrine, however defective from a Christian point of view, prepared the way for the intellectual apprehension and philosophical expression of the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Holy Trinity. But we must beware of assuming that the Logos was ever conceived by him as a distinct person. In this connection we may quote a passage from his writings, which seem to have escaped notice, but which well illustrates his bold use of metaphorical language :

τί οὖν ἂν ἐπιλίποι καλὸν τοῦ τελεσφόρου παρόντος θεοῦ
μετὰ χαρίτων τῶν παρθένων αὐτοῦ θυγατέρων
ἃς ἀδιαφθόρους καὶ ἀμιάντους ὁ γεννήσας πατήρ
κουροτροφεῖ.¹

Such expressions are a sufficient warning against pressing unduly the extremely vivid and personal language which Philo uses to describe the nature and function of the Logos. While accepting much of his language, and welcoming the philosophic statement of his conception, it was reserved for Christianity to completely revolutionize Philo's idea by turning his metaphysical personification into an historical Personality.

¹ Philo, *De Migratione Abrahami*, A vii. § 31.

PART VI.

THE USE OF PROPHECY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

OUR LORD'S USE OF PROPHECY.

THAT the New Testament should be an authoritative guide in interpreting the Old would be conceded by every believer in Scriptural revelation, but it needs no belief in revelation to tell us that any attempt to discover in what relation the two dispensations stand to one another must plainly be based upon the nature of the claim of the former to be organically connected with the latter. In the same way it would be idle to discuss the fulfilment of prophecy without first considering in what way and to what degree Christianity itself may profess to fulfil the prophetic ideals and expectations. It is only thus that we shall obtain a reliable standard by which its failure or success in this direction may be adequately measured. We propose, therefore, to interrogate the different writers of the New Testament as to the character and extent of their claim to find in the person and work of Christ the fulfilment of the Old Testament Scriptures ; and then,

by comparing the results of our investigation with the conclusions already reached as to the tendency and significance of prophetic literature, we hope to be able to determine with some accuracy how far their claims are justified, or, in other words, how far we ourselves are justified in speaking of the evidential value of Old Testament prophecy.

Our inquiry will naturally commence with an examination of the attitude our Lord Himself adopted towards the prophecies of the Old Testament. He recognized the prophetic office of the *whole* Old Testament, and claimed that He fulfilled it *all*.

*Think not that I came to destroy the law and the prophets. I came not to destroy but to fulfil.*¹ Let us study for a moment the nature of this fulfilment. The greater part of the Sermon on the Mount is devoted to its exposition, as far as the law is concerned, and we may reasonably infer that Christ's "fulfilment" of prophecy was of a similar nature. What *was said to them of old time* is confronted with what *I say unto you*; that is to say, Christ places His teaching in sharp contrast to the teaching of the law and the prophets. But what *was said to them of old time* was not to be destroyed but fulfilled. "It remained binding within its own limit, but it was to be filled out and deepened by a new spirit, the prohibition of murder, for instance, being fulfilled by the prohibition of anger against a brother. What is here implied is that behind the law in its original form there lay a Divine purpose for the law, and that the fulfilment of the law, in this pregnant sense

¹ Mt. v. 17.

of the word fulfilment, was an accomplishment of that Divine purpose."¹

Now, we shall not be wrong if we infer that what He here expressly states with respect to the law, is to be implicitly referred to the prophets as well, for the Lord Himself in the introductory verse quoted above joins the prophets with the law as the object of His fulfilment.

Our Lord then saw in Scripture an eternal purpose—eternal because Divine—and it was this purpose which He taught was fulfilled not only by but in Himself. Thus, when speaking to the Jews of *the witness* He could adduce in favour of His high claims, He tells them that they cannot have the word of God abiding in them, because though *ye search the scriptures because ye think that in them ye have eternal life, and they are they which bear witness concerning me, yet ye will not come to me that ye may have life.*² Here again our Lord does not merely allude to the prophetic predictions of a coming Deliverer, if indeed He refers to such at all. Rather, He calls attention to the purpose underlying all Scripture, which the Jews by their idolization of the letter failed to spiritually apprehend, and claims that in Him that purpose is realized. *The life* of which Scripture testified, but the meaning of which the Jews perpetually misunderstood, could only be found by *willing to come to him* who claims to be *the life, the truth, the way*. In this sense He can end His argument with these words: *For had ye believed Moses ye would have believed me; for he wrote concerning me. But if ye believe not his writings,*

¹ Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, 16.

² Jn. v. 39, 40.

*how shall ye believe my words?*¹ Here there seems, at first sight, to be an unquestionable reference to the promise of a prophet in Deut. xviii. 15, but still "the essence of the disbelief which the Jews showed to Moses lay in refusing to regard the law as transitory. They failed to seize the principle of life by which it was inspired, and petrified the form."² It is thus very doubtful whether Christ intended to allude to the prophecy in Deuteronomy in a directly Messianic sense; the import of that promise had consisted in the fact that God would never leave His people without prophetic guidance. But that was just precisely what the Jews refused to realize. Their slavish adherence to the letter of Scripture made it impossible for them to contemplate the possibility of a prophet who should fulfil its spirit by discarding the temporary and dispensational elements in which it was enshrined. Instead of that, they put *the writings* of Moses above Christ's *words*, yet, even so, they failed to notice that Moses' own *writings* contained a pointed reference to a higher ideal.

It is to this method of Christ in appealing to the general sense of Scripture that we refer a number of passages, the explanation of some of which has given considerable trouble to commentators.

(1) *He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.*³ Our Lord is noting the religious lessons to be drawn from the symbolism customary during the Feast of Tabernacles. On the previous seven days, libations

¹ Jn. v. 46, 47.

² Westcott, *Gosp. Acc. St. Jn.* p. 92.

³ Jn. vii. 38.

of water were made at the morning sacrifice, while Is. xii. 3¹ was sung in commemoration of the miraculous supply of water bestowed upon the Israelites in the wilderness. On the eighth day this rite was not continued, and Jesus professes to supply the want. *He stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst let him come unto me and drink.* He was the true Rock of which that mentioned in the story of the wanderings was but a figure. But all was not ended with the satisfaction of personal wants—the disciple would himself become like his Master, a source of refreshment to others. There is no reference here to any particular prophecy; our Lord alludes to all those numerous passages in Scripture where streams of water are typical of spiritual blessing.²

(2) *Therefore also said the wisdom of God, I will send unto them apostles and prophets, and they shall slay and persecute.*³ (We need not push the quotation further; *ἵνα* may even take up the *διὰ τοῦτο*.)

Now these words appear in a different context in St. Matthew as the words of Christ Himself. There is nothing, however, very surprising in this fact, as we shall see that the Lord frequently uses the words of Scripture in His own discourses without employing any formula of direct citation. But what are we to understand *by the wisdom of God*? and what are we to make of the fact that no such words as are cited are anywhere to be found? Surely the first

¹ *With joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.*

² E.g. Is. lviii. 11; Ezek. xlvii. 1, 12; Joel iii. 18; Zech. xiv. 8; Ps. lxxvii. 7.

³ Lk. xi. 49.

difficulty provides the solution of the second, and therewith of itself. The very vagueness of the phrase shows that we are not to understand the following passage as being a verbal quotation from any source. The Old Testament had shown only too clearly the result of God's providential care for the spiritual welfare of His people, and on numerous occasions the moral had been pointed out. Accordingly our Lord, when reflecting on the fate which He and His own Apostles should share in common with the prophets before them, compressed the general tenor of several O.T. passages into one brief and pregnant sentence. *The wisdom of God* is nothing but the personification of the spirit of Old Testament prophecy.¹

(3) The next passage we propose to consider is our Lord's reference to a prophecy fulfilled in the case of St. John the Baptist, and recorded only by St. Matthew and St. Mark.² The three apostles who had been admitted to behold the transfiguration had apparently been specially struck by the appearance of Elijah. The scribes had based on Mal. iv. 4 the doctrine of his return in glory before the Messiah's advent, and this seemed to contradict both the fact of his appearance on the mount and the words which our Lord had employed concerning His own future resurrection. They accordingly asked the Master to solve their difficulties. He did so, by a double line of argument.

¹ Esp. Jer. vii. 24-28 (not cited by Plummer *in loc.*).

² Mk. ix. 12, 13; Mt. xvii. 11, 12. We can easily account for the silence of St. Luke; his readers would have had no interest in the traditional interpretations of the Scribes.

(i.) *I say unto you both that Elijah has come and they have done unto him what they would*, καθὼς γέγραπται ἐπ' αὐτόν, the latter clause only by St. Mark. Our Lord, therefore, identifies John with the Elijah of Malachi. According to St. Matthew, He had already done so once before :¹ καὶ εἰ θέλετε δέξασθαι, οὗτός ἐστιν Ἡλείας ὁ μέλλων ἔρχεσθαι.

Now, from this all-important saying, three conclusions may be drawn respecting our Saviour's view as to the right interpretation of prophecy :

(a) We notice first the spiritualization of the original prediction. Our Lord seizes upon the moral rather than the miraculous element in Malachi's prophecy, and emphasizes the former almost, if not quite, to the entire exclusion of the latter. We hear nothing about *a great and terrible day of the Lord*, nor can the words of our Lord possibly be held to signify a belief in a personal reappearance of Elijah, such as the prophet doubtless anticipated. Now this is all the more remarkable as the vision at the transfiguration might have suggested a more literal "fulfilment." "It was not the glorified visitant of the night vision, but the beheaded preacher of the wilderness"² in whom our Lord bade his disciples recognize the true Elijah.³

(b) We next note the stress our Lord lays on the moral qualifications necessary for a proper understanding of the significance of prophecy. εἰ θέλετε δέξασθαι should be written large across every attempt

¹ Mt. xi. 14. ² Bruce, *Gosp. acc. Mt.* 231; but why "*night vision*"?

³ The LXX ἀποκαταστήσει at least suggests the thought of a temporal restoration—our Lord while retaining the word gives it a spiritual significance in accordance with the original.

to show how the Gospels fulfil the prophets. God never produces such proofs as will convince men against their will.¹ However strong the argument from prophecy, yet it may always be successfully resisted or evaded unless men *have the will to receive it*. Prophecy, it would therefore seem from the Lord's point of view, is not so much intended to produce conviction as to confirm faith.

(c) We observe finally that our Lord does not refer only to a single passage in proof of His assertion, but rather to the general sense of Scripture as a whole. *They did to him whatsoever they listed, even as it is written concerning him.*² But where is this written? Nowhere in the Old Testament *totidem verbis*. Our Lord once more appeals to the whole drift and tendency of Scripture as illustrated not only in the fate designed for Elijah, but also in the repeated complaints of the prophets concerning the ill-treatment which they suffered at the hands of their contemporaries.

This leads us on to the second part of the Lord's reply to the enquiry of His disciples.

(ii.) *How is it written concerning the Son of Man that he should suffer many things and be set at nought?*³ The significance of this verse in this connection is perfectly plain. Difficulties concerning the interpretation of Old Testament prophecy are all dependent for *their* solution on *the* great difficulty being solved—that of a suffering Messiah. In the light of its solution, they themselves are solved. But *how is it written concerning the Son of Man that he should*

¹ Cf. the fine passage in Athanasius, *De Incarn.* lvii.

² Mk. ix. 13.

³ Mk. ix. 12.

suffer many things? Again we miss the reference to any particular Scripture, though it is not hard to see what passages were in our Lord's mind.¹ He prefers to let his hearers examine for themselves the great principles which underlie all the Old Testament teaching concerning the suffering and pain and humiliation, whether of God's special saints, or of the chosen people, or of the human race, which must precede the final glory and triumph and exaltation.

(4) Very similar to the passage just quoted is the solemn declaration on the eve of His Passion. *The Son of man goeth as it is written concerning him,*² καθὼς γέγραπται περὶ αὐτοῦ (Mt., Mk.), a reference to the Hebrew scriptures which St. Luke apparently thought would be without interest for his Gentile readers, and hence replaces by κατὰ τὸ ὀρισμένον. It is surely quite an unwarrantable limitation of the scope of our Lord's words to suppose that He only refers to the manner of His "going" by betrayal, and to cite such passages as Mic. vii. 6 and Obad. 7 in illustration of His meaning.³ Far rather must He be understood as referring to the whole course of inevitable suffering which according to the psalms and the prophets must be endured before the true representative of humanity, the Son of Man, could enter upon His glory.

(5) Similarly, St. Matthew introduces into our Lord's remonstrance with St. Peter for smiting the servant of the high priest, a question as to how the rescue of Messiah, whether by such violent means or

¹ Ps. xxii. 6 LXX; and Is. liii. 3 Symm.

² Mk. xiv. 21; Mt. xxvi. 24; Lk. xxii. 22.

³ So apparently Plummer.

by the *twelve legions of angels* whose assistance He could immediately procure, could be consistent with His divinely ordained fate, foreshadowed by the Scriptures. *How then could the scriptures be fulfilled that thus it must be?*¹

(6) Again, when Jesus complains of the manner of His arrest, He checks Himself, and adds ἀλλ' ἵνα πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαί, where we have once more exactly the same appeal to the whole tenor of Scriptural doctrine with which we are now familiar.² (This is again omitted by St. Luke.)

(7) We now come to two post-Resurrection utterances of precisely the same nature. The first referred to the despair of the two sorrowing disciples whose company He joined as they journeyed to Emmaus.

*And he said unto them: O foolish men! and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken. Must not the Christ suffer these things and enter into his glory? And beginning from Moses and from all the prophets he expounded unto them in all the scriptures the things concerning himself.*³

Once more we note the universality of the appeal to Scripture. It is not a passage here and there which the disciples were slow to understand. They must learn *to believe all that the prophets have spoken* and not merely in one or two but *in all the prophets*. But the mention of the prophets appears to presuppose a certain limitation. That, however, is soon dispelled. For He began *from Moses* and explained *all the scriptures* concerning Himself.

¹ Mt. xxvi. 54.

² Mk. xiv. 49; cf. Mt. xxvi. 56.

³ Lk. xxiv. 25-27.

(8) The last passage is perhaps the most important. The Lord was now with His apostles, *and he said unto them: These are the words which I spake unto you being yet with you, that all things that are written concerning me in the law of Moses and in the prophets and psalms must be fulfilled.*

Then opened he their mind that they should understand the scriptures, and he said unto them: Thus it is written that

- (i.) *The Christ should suffer,*
- (ii.) *And should rise from the dead on the third day;*
- (iii.) *And that repentance*
- (iv.) *unto remission of sins in his Name*
- (v.) *should be preached unto all the nations,*
- (vi.) *beginning at Jerusalem.*¹

He adds :

- (vii.) A summary of the Apostles' function (which is also that of the Church), *Ye are witnesses of these things.*
- (viii.) An assurance of their endowment for the task: *Behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you.*

These latter no less than the former are ideas and promises which the prophets connected with their Messianic ideals, although they are not formally cited here as quotations from prophecy.

Before commenting on this unique passage, we would call attention to the fact that it plainly appears to be a summary of the Lord's discourse to His disciples during the great Forty Days. Whether

¹ Lk. xxiv. 44-49.

ἐλάλησα refers to His words before the Passion or to some unrecorded discourse after He had risen from the dead, it plainly includes a reference to what He was then saying. We might perhaps venture to translate, *I spake aforetime and now repeat*. Turning to the Acts of the Apostles, we find the whole of Christ's post-Resurrection teaching summarized under the comprehensive term of *the things concerning the kingdom of God*,¹ while here it is brought into direct connection with the fulfilment of prophecy.

We thus possess our Lord's own commentary on the expression, and we will now seek to ascertain the salient features in His conception of the prophetic representation of *the things concerning the kingdom of God*.

(a) We observe once more the comprehensiveness of His belief as to what really constituted prophecy. The Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms all were parts of one great Messianic prophecy.

(b) He then gives us the substance of this prophecy concerning Himself and His kingdom, which He declares has been or shall yet be fulfilled. He claims that the whole story of His life and the whole history of the Church will be found to correspond with the prophetic principles underlying the whole Old Testament. He asserts that He is *the* Christ, the Messiah, the Personality for whom the prophets looked. He declares that by His death and resurrection He has fulfilled their deepest thought—that it is only through suffering that true glory can be attained. He depicts the universal character of His empire—*beginning from Jerusalem*

¹ Acts i. 3.

it will embrace *all nations*—thus realizing one of the most beautiful of all Old Testament ideals. He announces the great gift which He as King will dispense to all His subjects, *the remission of sins*—the highest blessing of the New Covenant, which Jeremiah predicted. He defines the function of His Church as consisting, like Israel's of old, in the task of witnessing to the true religion and the true God. Lastly, He foretells the gift of the Spirit at no distant date to quicken her into new life and strength for the accomplishment of her great and glorious task.

Such then is the Lord's general attitude to Scripture :

1. He did not claim to fulfil isolated fragments, but the whole body of Scripture.

2. This fulfilment was not literal, but spiritual. It gave Scripture a deeper and a broader sense.

3. The fulfilment was two-fold. (i.) In His teaching. (ii.) In His life.

4. With regard to His own Person, three points are specially emphasized :

(i.) That He is Messiah : τὸν Χριστόν, cf. ἐν ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ.

(ii.) That He must suffer : δεῖ παθεῖν.

(iii.) That suffering is the prelude to glory : καὶ εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν δόξαν (καὶ ἀναστῆναι).

There is, however, one more point which we must consider. What is the meaning of the *necessity* to which the Lord alludes so often in this connection? Why *must* the Scriptures be fulfilled?

Now, it will be of some assistance to us in answering this question to recollect that δεῖ is used

of a Divine necessity—the fulfilment is not a mere chance occurrence, but is Divinely contrived. But this does not settle the exact sense to be attached to the *must* which seems to be so important a thought with our Lord.

We may approach the question in three ways :

(1) The Divine foresight had communicated to the prophets and psalmists of an earlier period the exact course which events were to take. As a natural consequence, such events *must* come to pass, else they could not have been foreseen, and would not have been foretold.

But this view may be safely rejected :

- (α) It involves a mechanical view as to the origin of prophecy, which we have seen to be wholly untenable.
- (β) It divests the idea of fulfilment of any moral significance. It is intolerable to contemplate the life of Christ merely as an illustration of things happening just because they must happen.
- (γ) It forgets that our Lord, in these general references of His, appeals to the whole character of Old Testament prophecy not in support of events at all, but of great principles which received in His own case the most signal illustration.

(2) A second view would seek the explanation of such language in a peculiarity of the Semitic mind which we have already had occasion to notice. The Bible knows practically nothing of secondary causes. It sees in every action of friend or enemy an instance of the direct intervention of

God. To the Evangelists, therefore, and indeed to the Lord Himself, every consequence would appear in the light of a result, for in the long run everything was attributable to the Divine will. A telic significance would thus be imported into passages from which to our way of thinking it would be entirely absent. Our Lord therefore, when He found that the Scriptures were being pre-eminently fulfilled in Himself, spoke of this fulfilment as part of the Divine counsel from the beginning. This view derives much justification from the somewhat frequent interchange of final and consequential conjunctions employed to express apparently the same idea, but it hardly seems to do sufficient justice to the emphasis of our Lord's language, and to many minds it will seem only to solve the difficulty by explaining it away.

(3) A more satisfactory interpretation is that advocated by Bp. Westcott in his commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews. The saints, kings, priests and prophets of Jehovah in olden days had each of them gone through a religious and historical experience which was directly connected with their realization of the privileges and possibilities of their office. In so far as their own life and conduct corresponded with the ideals set before them, so far their sufferings and victories were of more than personal interest. They became invested with a typical significance, and thus when Christ came, the perfect Prophet, Priest, and King, He not only perfectly discharged their office, but also completely realized their experience. And it was necessary that He should do so, for what the

imperfect saint imperfectly felt and accomplished, that must the perfect Saint perfectly fulfil.

It is then, in this sense, that our Lord insists that the Scriptures *must* be fulfilled in Him. He is convinced that the record of the past history of the people of God is not a mere chance collection of accidental episodes. In every struggle, in every sorrow, in every hope, in every triumph, in every life, in every death, He sees something of the Divine purpose and the Divine will realizing itself in the life of man; and it is this Divine purpose and Divine will that He has set Himself to perfectly accomplish in His own incarnate life among the sons of men. All that they strove after, however ineffectually, all that they attained, however partially, must in Him be completely and perfectly fulfilled.

If this be our Lord's view—and it is most strongly supported by the sense which, as we have seen, belongs to His idea of fulfilment—we can claim His authority for the method of interpretation which we have ourselves adopted, and at the same time for the immense value which we have been led to attach to prophecy as preparing the way for *the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow*.

We must now examine the actual quotations and references of our Lord to the Prophets and P'salms. Here some critical difficulties obtrude themselves. How far can we be sure of the *ipsissima verba* of the Lord Himself? May not some of the references and quotations have been put into His mouth by the pious imagination of a later age? or may they not occasionally be due to the *tendenz* of the

evangelist himself? These questions are by no means unjustifiable; they concern the literary character of the Gospels, and as such are worthy of careful consideration. But we may take the following facts for granted as a working hypothesis:

(1) The quotations common to all the Synoptists may certainly be considered genuine. They belong to a common tradition which betrays no signs whatever of any direct or indirect influence of prophecy upon its clear and unvarnished narrative of the Lord's earthly life.

(2) Of quotations, etc., common to St. Matthew and St. Luke, we may say the same as of those common to all the Synoptists. Their employment by two evangelists of such different aims and character shows that they originally belonged to the "Non-Markan document,"¹ which is at least as free from apologetic tendencies as St. Mark.

(3) Any references peculiar to St. Mark are probably genuine. We must, of course, be prepared to admit the possibility of later insertions, but most of the additions of St. Mark bear upon them the stamp of their own authenticity, and we can usually assign adequate grounds for their omission by the other evangelists.

(4) When St. Mark is supported by one of the other evangelists, that makes his testimony all the stronger, and it may be accepted without hesitation.

(5) Where we come across a quotation or reference in St. Luke which does not occur in either of

¹ We use this expression to denote those portions of the first and third Gospels, which appear to be derived from a common source independent of the Marcan account of Our Lord's life.

the other two Gospels, it may be accepted with confidence. St. Luke's attitude towards prophecy, in his Gospel at any rate, appears to be the very reverse of enthusiastic. On more than one occasion he deliberately omits or alters passages in which the others refer to the fulfilment of prophecy, and which would be barely intelligible to his Gentile readers. St. Luke, it is true, writes history with a purpose (what true historian does not?). He strives to show the universal character of the Gospel. This hardly amounts to a "strong anti-Judaic tendency." If, however, such a tendency existed, it is obvious that he would not seek to establish its legitimacy by a reference to the Jewish Scriptures. We therefore conclude that such quotations of, and references to, the Old Testament Scriptures which we find our Lord using only in St. Luke have the very highest claim to be considered perfectly authentic.

(6) In the first Gospel we are confronted with phenomena of exactly the opposite character. St. Matthew betrays the liveliest interest in prophecy, and, whenever possible, introduces a reference to its fulfilment. Can we be certain that his zeal in this direction has not occasionally led him to interpret and expand our Lord's own utterances with a similar apologetic aim? If he did so, we may be quite sure that he was convinced that he was only exercising the legitimate function of an editor, in adapting the Lord's words to the needs of those for whom the Gospel was written; and that he aims at bringing out their significance in accordance with the views which he believed the Lord Himself to hold, and may even have heard Him *expound*

*privately*¹ to His disciples. But a caution is necessary against attributing every allusion to prophecy, which in this gospel alone occurs in the mouth of our Lord, to the special interest of St. Matthew in the subject. St. Luke, as we have already observed, on three occasions at least eliminates all reference to fulfilment, where there can be absolutely no question that it was contained in the source which he used in common with the other Synoptists. Does it not stand to reason that he treated the non-Marcian document in precisely the same way? St. Luke was at least as much influenced by literary motives against, as was St. Matthew for, the insertion of a large number of citations from the Old Testament. We therefore conclude that St. Matthew may have often preserved references made by our Lord to Old Testament prophecies and narratives which occurred in the non-Marcian document, but which St. Luke may have omitted as uninteresting or unedifying for the Gentile Christians whom he had in view. Nor must we exclude the possibility that St. Matthew may have independently preserved passages which found a place in the original tradition. But there are some instances which are too insecure for any inference to be based upon them. These will need a separate examination when we are dealing with St. Matthew's own use of prophecy.

We begin by an examination of those quotations of the prophets and psalms which are attributed to our Lord by all the Synoptists. These are very few—four from the prophets and two from the

¹ St. Mark iv. 34.

psalms—Is. vi. 9, Is. lvi. 7, Jer. vii. 11, Ps. cxviii. 22, Ps. cx. 1 (Is. xxxiv. 4).

Of these the quotations from the prophets concern only His teaching, while any inferences as to His person and character must be derived solely from the psalms. This is, to say the least, a most suggestive fact, of which those who unduly emphasize the predictive side of prophecy may be invited to take special notice. Of the six quotations from the Prophets and the Psalter, which the earliest tradition places in our Lord's mouth, not a single one makes the least claim to any kind of predictive character.

Let us now subject the passages in question to a somewhat more detailed inspection :

(1) Is. vi. 9 alludes to the awful commission which Isaiah received to preach to the impenitent and obdurate people whom his efforts to arouse from their spiritual lethargy would only harden and make yet more callous to divine things.¹ We saw that, however harshly this conception might be formulated in the account of Isaiah's call and consecration, it yet expressed a great truth of the spiritual world. The abundance and fulness of revelation tends only to perpetuate and intensify the obduracy of those who have no wish to profit by it. The Saviour, who *knew of himself what was in man*, quickly realized that His own ministry was having a similar effect. *This is the judgement,*

¹ Is. vi. 9. *Unto them that are without all things are done in parables, that, seeing they may see and not perceive, and hearing they may hear and not understand, lest haply they should turn again, and it should be forgiven them.* Mk. iv. 11, Mt. xiii. 14 (fuller), Lk. viii. 10.

*that the light is come into the world, and men loved the darkness rather than the light: for their works were evil.*¹ Even among His own disciples He had on more than one occasion detected signs of this "process of moral ossification"² (πώρωσις). He therefore adopted the system of parabolic teaching, which would serve to quicken interest and arouse attention among those who were willing to learn; while on the other hand it would avoid the danger of throwing pearls before swine. Nothing was more natural than for Him to justify His method by quoting the passage from Isaiah which explained its necessity.

(2), (3) If the first passage was intended to defend the method of His teaching, the next two were employed to enforce its substance.³ More than one prophet had occasion to rebuke the Jews for their carelessness and indifference in holy things, which furnished a deplorable contrast to the Divine purpose with regard to the universal diffusion of Israel's religion. Jeremiah in particular had lamented the gross irreverence with which priests and people had insulted the holiness of Jehovah's house. Was it no better in their eyes, he indignantly asked, than *a cave of thieves*? But a brighter day had dawned. The prophet of the exile had spoken of the temple as destined to become the centre of the world-wide worship. And our Lord may well have

¹ Jn. iii. 19.

² Dr. Swete on St. Mk. iii. 5.

³ Is. lvi. 7. It is written: *My house shall be called a house of prayer for all people.* Jer. vii. 11: *Is this house called by my name become in your eyes (but ye have made it) a den of thieves.* Mt. xxi. 10, Mk. xi. 17, Lk. xix. 46.

meditated on this passage as having an illuminative bearing on the sphere of His own message. But the Jews, far from attempting to bring about the fulfilment of the prophecy, had more than neutralized its effect by relapsing into a state of shameful irreverence, which recalled the words of the earlier prophet. What wonder, then, that the Lord, when, consumed with zeal for Jehovah's house, He cleansed the temple of the traffic and merchandize which made prayer an impossibility, found a vent for His indignation in the words of prophecy which must have immediately sprung to His mind.

But what of the psalms? These deal with the Lord's person, just as the prophets have been quoted in connection with His teaching—a fact which shows us, even apart from Lk. xxiv. 44, how inadequate would be any discussion on this subject which refused to recognize in the Psalter one of the most essential factors in the evidential value of O.T. prophecy.

(4) Psalm cxviii.¹ is the first to be quoted by our Lord. He has been speaking of His rejection by the Sanhedrists in the parable of the vineyard and the wicked husbandmen, and this scripture occurs to Him as being particularly suitable to illustrate His contention that God often wrought His most *marvellous* works by instruments which the haughty builders had *rejected with scorn*. The psalm had called attention to this truth in the history of the chosen nation, and the Lord, with

¹ Ps. cxviii. 22, 23. *The same stone which the builders refused is become the headstone of the corner. This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.* Mt. xxi. 9, Mk. xi. 9, Lk. xix. 38.

His wonderful insight into the spiritual principles latent in all O.T. revelation, hints that it will receive a new and yet more striking application in Himself.

(5) The next quotation¹ was probably also suggested by the cry of the multitudes when they hailed Him as their king. They had greeted with fervour *the coming kingdom of their father David*;² and not long before, blind Bartimaeus had called on Him for mercy, using the title *Son of David*.³ Doubtless the Pharisees had heard and objected. They had very different ideas as to what rôle the Son of David should fulfil. The Lord having answered all the questions of His enemies, now propounds one for their solution. Its wording in St. Mark is full of significance.

Jesus said, *How do the scribes say, that the Christ (the Messiah) is son of David? David himself said in the holy spirit—Ps. cx. 1, etc. David himself calleth him Lord, and whence is he his son?*

The passage is a critical one for the right understanding of our Lord's interpretation of prophecy, and must be examined at length:

(i.) The question does not turn upon the language of scripture at all, but an inference drawn from it; *not* how saith the scripture? but *how say the scribes?*

(ii.) Our Lord's mention of David as the author of the psalm does not determine the question of authorship any more than His reference to the *rising* and *setting* of the sun was intended to close for ever the legitimate exercise of astronomical research.

¹ Ps. cx. 1; cf. Mt. xxii. 44, Mk. xii. 36, Lk. xx. 42.

² Mk. xi. 10.

³ Mk. x. 46-52.

In such matters He was content to share the beliefs of His age. "David" to Him and to His contemporaries was practically synonymous with "the Psalter."

(iii.) The expression ἐν τῷ πνεύματι τῷ ἁγίῳ is a simple statement of the claim to inspiration with which the psalm itself opens—*oracle of Jehovah*, **נאם יהוה**.

(iv.) The word *lord* applied to "David's son" is "Adoni," **אדני**, not "Jehovah," **יהוה**, *i.e.* it does not connote the idea of Divinity.

(v.) It is customary to speak of our Lord as "raising a difficulty" with regard to the title involved. But this is scarcely accurate, as such an expression is capable of being taken in more than one way. Our Lord uses precisely the same formula with regard to the scriptural doctrine of the suffering Son of man as He does here concerning the Rabbinic belief in the conquering Son of David. *πὼς γέγραπται ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, κ.τ.λ.*

But no one would say that He is raising a difficulty about this scriptural presentation.

(vi.) "His whole argument rests on the hypothesis that the prevalent view was correct." We cannot admit the correctness of this statement. The argument is really untouched by the genuineness of the Davidic authorship. The real point lies in the fact that the Psalter admittedly applies to the Messiah language so impressive and exalted as to be incompatible with the ordinary acceptance of the Davidic sonship.

What, then, is the significance of the Lord's question? It means no more, and no less, than

what it actually says. *David himself calleth him Lord—whence is he his son?*

Whence indeed? The Pharisees had never really faced that question. Scripture speaks of Him (this psalm is a special instance) in terms utterly inapplicable to an ordinary lineal descendant of David. If they wished to retain the title they must give it a deeper meaning than that of mere physical descent. *Whence is He his son?* The answer which Christ wished to suggest is clear. He is not his son in the letter, but in the spirit: or perhaps we should be more accurate in formulating the answer as follows. He is only his son in so far as He is his son in the spirit. That is to say, that if we are not justified in arguing that Christ altogether rejects the physical descent from David, we may confidently assert that He valued it only in so far as it was an outward pledge or guarantee of that spiritual kingship of character which could alone make Messiah a true Son of David.

This conclusion is emphatically borne out by another very similar passage.

How say the scribes that Elias must first come? asked the disciples. Our Lord did not deny the inference of the scribes as to Elijah's advent, any more than He here denies that He is Son of David. But He gave the idea an entirely new significance. *Elias indeed cometh.* The proposition is correct as far as it goes; but the Lord proceeds to point out that the idea underlying this belief must be freed from all carnal association, and spiritually interpreted of John the Baptist, who, as St. John¹ tells

¹Jn. i. 21, 25.

us, was not Elijah ; yet who, as St. Luke informs us in his opening chapter, was Elijah because he was the truest representative of his *power and spirit*.¹ Our Lord therefore admits John's identification with Elijah,² not on the ground of any physical affinity, but because of the intense moral earnestness which the two men had in common. Would not our Lord have treated His own claim to be the Son of David in precisely the same way ?

Happily we are not left to conjecture. While speaking of John the Baptist, He drops a hint concerning Himself for our guidance. *And how is it written with regard to the son of man that he should suffer many things and be set at nought ?* We may well ask how. It is in fact not written anywhere that *the son of man should suffer many things*. The Apostles are warned that if they would seek the interpretation of Christ's life and death in the Old Testament scriptures, *they will not find it in the letter but in the spirit*. This and none other we take to be the meaning of His question here. *Whence is he his son ?* If it be indeed true that our Lord could claim lineal descent from David, it is clear that He attached no importance whatever to the fact. He never speaks of it again ; and in this passage which constitutes His single allusion to this belief, He plainly intimates that the value of the Davidic sonship lay in something far higher than the physical fact which was supposed to underlie the Rabbinic exegesis of the Messianic hope, while the

¹ Lk. i. 17.

² Mt. xi. 14 ; cf. Mt. xvii. 11, 12 ; Mk. ix. 12, 13 ; and Lk. vii. 26, 27.

form of His question seems to imply that here also we should look for the spiritual rather than the literal correspondence between prophecy and its fulfilment.

(6) In His apocalyptic discourse Jesus seems to quote Is. xxxiv. 4.¹ Such a quotation is, however, merely a literary reminiscence, which is of no importance for our present purpose.

We now proceed to a consideration of those prophetic quotations of our Lord which are only reported by St. Matthew and St. Mark. These amount to five in number: Is. xxix. 13, Dan. xiii. 14, Zech. xiii. 7, Ps. xlii. 5, Ps. xxii. 1, to which we may add the reference to Ezek. xxxiv. 5, in which we may probably discern the remnant of one of our Lord's own quotations.

(1) Is. xxix. 13 speaks of the mechanical and external character of formal religion.² It gives expression to one of the most characteristic thoughts of prophecy, that true religion consists in heart-worship, and not in self-imposed acts of scrupulous ritual observance. The passage must have been very familiar to our Lord, whose doctrine it so remarkably anticipated, and His application of the words to the Pharisaic ceremonialism of His day is strikingly appropriate. St. Luke omits the whole section. What would his readers understand of the Jewish notions of ceremonial defilement which formed the basis of the discussion which led to our Lord's quotation?

¹ Is. xxxiv. 4, *All the host of heaven shall be dissolved, the powers of the heavens shall be shaken*, Mt. xxiv. 29, Mk. xiii. 24, Lk. xxi. 26.

² Mk. vii. 6, *Well did Isaiah prophesy of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. But in vain do they worship me, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men*, cf. Mt. xv. 8, 9.

(2) Dan. ix. 27, xi. 31, xii. 11 are quoted by Christ in His great apocalyptic discourse.¹ He bids His hearers mark the signs of the times: in particular when they see *the abomination of desolation* standing where it ought not, then they may be sure that the end is very near. This warning is in both gospels followed by a curious note—ὁ ἀναγινώσκων νοεῖτω—which seems too strange a phrase to apply to the reading of the evangelical narrative. It would therefore be preferable to regard it as a hint of our Lord's to follow up the clue He has given in the preceding words. Be that as it may, we would direct attention to the fact that our Lord realized the double significance of every prophecy. For, according to the Bible which our Lord used, this prophecy had already been fulfilled once in the profanation of the sanctuary by Antiochus Epiphanes in erecting an altar to Zeus in the midst of the sacred precincts.² Here our Lord takes up the phrase, and recognizes that it may yet have a meaning even when its primary application has been exhausted. We should observe in passing St. Luke's bold paraphrase, in the light of the event, for the benefit of those to whom the phrase would have been no more than an unintelligible enigma.³

(3) At the close of the last supper, Jesus predicted to His disciples that they would all be offended in Him.⁴ He felt convinced that this would be the case. Had it not always been the

¹ Mk. xiii. 14, Mt. xxiv. 15.

² It had been already quoted in this connection.—1 Macc. i. 54.

³ κυκλουμένην ὑπὸ στρατοπεδῶν Ἱερουσαλήμ Lk. xxi. 20.

⁴ Zech. xiii. 10, *Smile the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered*, Mt. xxvi. 31, Mk. xiv. 27. Παράξω (fut. for imperative).

case with those whom God had raised up, that in the most critical hour they could look for no human sympathy or assistance? One particular instance forced itself upon His memory. The allegory of the good shepherd in Zechariah had, as we can gather from such passages as Luke xv. and John x., taken a strong hold upon His imagination. Indeed, it was under this conception that some of the most beautiful thoughts of Old Testament prophecy found expression. But we have noticed how the pastoral ideal necessarily suggested the inevitable concomitants of the pastoral office, anxiety, trouble, and even pain; while in Zechariah's allegory still more bitter thoughts found expression—the shepherd's sorrowful disillusionment, his contemptuous rejection by princes and people, the scattering of the flock he had so carefully tended, and his own unmerited and violent death. It is true that the description contained a hope of national repentance and ultimate victory, but it was not on this side of the picture that our Lord looked in the hours before His passion. He saw in the shepherd's fate a premonition of His own. *All ye shall be offended, for it is written, I will smite the shepherd and the sheep shall be scattered.* St. Luke's omission is unaccountable, save on the general hypothesis that he avoided giving references with which his readers might be unacquainted.

(4) The next passage¹ was spoken very shortly after the last, when Jesus and His disciples had reached Gethsemane. It is, perhaps, no more than a reminiscence of one of the psalms with which

¹ Ps. xlii. 5, *ὅσα τί περιλυπος εἶ, ἡ ψυχὴ*; LXX. Mt. xxvi. 38, Mk. xiv. 34, *περίλυπός ἐστιν ἡ ψυχὴ μου*.

our Lord was especially familiar. The psalm describes an exile's longing for the Temple-worship, where he can once more be assured of God's help and mercy; but the fact that our Lord appears to quote the same psalm on quite a different occasion shows how He made His own all the longings and aspirations of the godly in Israel.

(5) The last quotation is also from the Psalter.

As the Lord hung upon the Cross, He burst forth into the agonized words which formed the opening of Ps. xxii.¹ It is another proof of His devotion to the Psalter, but this does not touch the real significance of the quotation. We cannot suppose that He uttered the words of the psalm without any reference to their context, especially as there was so much in what was going on all around, to remind Him of its further applicability to His own case. We have every reason to believe that in making that cry of despair His own, the Lord deliberately identified Himself with that ideal servant of Jehovah whose sufferings and final triumph form the subject of the Psalmist's theme. The Aramaic language in which the words were originally handed down,² would have been sufficient to deter St. Luke from incorporating them into his gospel.

(6) Lastly, we notice the pathetic little note common to the first two gospels as to the ground of Jesus' compassion for the multitude *ὅτι ἦσαν ὡς πρόβατα μὴ ἔχοντα ποιμένα*.³ This beautiful reference

¹ *My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me?* Mk. xv. 34, Mt. xxvii. 46.

² אֱלֹהֵי אֱלֵי לָמָּה עֲזַבְתָּנִי; in the Psalm, לָמָּה עֲזַבְתָּנִי.

³ Ezek. xxxiv. 5, *And they were scattered because there was no shepherd* (cf. Numb. xxvii. 17, 1 Kings xxii. 17), Mt. ix. 36, Mk. vi. 34.

we shall surely not be far wrong in attributing to the Lord Himself; the evangelists having thrown it into a kind of "oblique oration" in the midst of their narrative.

There are, however, two more prophetic references by our Lord which have been recorded only in St. Mark, and both of these are employed to enforce His own teaching,—Jer. v. 21¹ (parallel to Ez. xii. 2) and Is. lxvi. 24.² Their application is obvious; they contain no difficulties and call for no comment.

These fourteen quotations taken from the Marcan document are a very fair and representative selection of the Lord's citations. But before drawing any conclusions let us notice the only three which can with certainty be attributed to the "non-Markan" document: Is. xxxv. 5, 6; Mal. iii. 1; Jer. xxii. 5 (Ps. cxviii. 26).

(1) and (2) both occur in the section dealing with our Lord's appreciation of St. John the Baptist—but while (1) refers to our Lord, (2) refers to John.

(1) Our Lord describes His own miracles in language borrowed from the prophet's glowing description of the Messianic days.³ Though there is no direct quotation, there can be little doubt that

¹ *O foolish people which have eyes and see not, which have ears and hear not*, Jer. v. 21 (and Ezek. xii. 2); Mk. viii. 18.

² *Their worm shall not die neither shall their fire be quenched*, Is. lxvi. 24; Mk. ix. 48.

³ Is. xxxv. 5, 6, *The eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as a hart and the tongue of the dumb shall sing*, Mt. xi. 5; Lk. vii. 22. *The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk . . . and the deaf hear . . . and the poor have good tidings preached to them* (cf. Is. lx. 1).

our Lord employed Isaiah's phraseology to convey to John's mind an affirmative answer to the latter's question as to whether he should accept Jesus as the promised Messiah, or *look for another*.

(2) John is described as the messenger whom the Lord would send before Him *to prepare his way* before Him.¹ The words affirm that the prophecy is fulfilled in the Baptist, and were doubtless intended to enhance his dignity—but they are also definitely Messianic, as Christ does not hesitate to apply to His own coming words which were originally used in connection with the advent of Jehovah Himself.

The words are also found in a totally different connection at the opening of St. Mark's gospel.² Their position there is not free from textual or critical difficulties, but perhaps the most probable supposition is that they did originally form part of the beginning of the Marcan document, but that they also occurred in the non-Markan document, and that St. Matthew and St. Luke adopting the latter arrangement saw no need for repetition, especially as both these gospels had independent materials at their disposal for the commencement of the gospel story.

(3) Has no Messianic reference (unless we suppose that our Lord deliberately set His seal to the acclamations of the people by the casual reference

¹ Mal. iii. 1, Mt. xi. 10, Lk. vii. 27, *This is he of whom it is written, Behold I send my messenger before thy face, who shall prepare thy way before thee*.

² *Even as it is written in Isaiah the prophet* (so 8BDL 1, 33, latt, syrr exc: hcl-txt. arm. Ir. Orig.), *Behold I send my messenger, etc. . . . the voice of one crying, etc*

here to the verses which formed their anthem),¹ but it is very noticeable that the words were originally attributed in the strongest possible manner to Jehovah Himself. *If ye will not hear these words, I swear by myself, saith Jehovah, that this house shall become a desolation.* We may also note that our Lord again recognizes the primary and secondary senses of prophecy. For this prediction had already been literally accomplished, but in Him it could find a yet deeper and more permanent, because more spiritual fulfilment.

To sum up—taking the Marcan document first :

- (i.) We observe that there are ten quotations from the Prophets and four from the Psalter (some, however, would include Ps. xli. 9 = Mk. xiv. 8—but this at the very most is a reference, not a quotation). That is to say, the Psalter contributes about a third of the total number of passages quoted.
- (ii.) Exactly one-half are omitted by St. Luke for reasons which we can generally discern. This at any rate creates a presumption in favour of the possibility of his having excluded a very considerable number of quotations which originally found a place in the non-Markan document; and that where such are retained by St. Matthew, the latter has been the more faithful in his adherence to the original.

¹ *Behold your house is left unto you desolate* (Jer. xxii. 5); *Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord"* (Ps. cxviii. 26); Mt. xxiii. 38, 39; Lk. xiii. 35.

- (iii.) Of the passages we have discussed, two or possibly three (Is. xxxiv. 4 ; Ps. xlii. 4 ; Dan. xiii. 14) may be merely literary or devotional reminiscences.
- (iv.) Of the remaining eight "prophecies"—*Five* (more than half) are used to illustrate or enforce Christ's teaching (Is. lvi. 7 ; Jer. vii. 11 ; Is. xxix. 13 ; Is. lxvi. 24 ; Jer. v. 21 ; Ez. xii. 2). *Two* describe the character of His work (Is. vi. 9 ; Ez. xxxiv. 5). *One* he quotes as typical of His own fate (Zech. xiii. 7), and this in the original is not a future, but an imperative: it is a type rather than a prediction.
- (v.) Of the three remaining psalms *all* refer to different aspects of His Person and character.

In Ps. xxii. He seems to identify Himself with the suffering *Servant of Jehovah*.

In Ps. cx. He bids the Pharisees to look deeper into scripture to discern the real character of ideals—especially in regard to the *Son of David*.

In Ps. cxviii. He applies to His own case the language of *the Messianic kingdom*, despised and rejected of men, chosen and honoured by God.

It may thus be asserted with truth of the oldest record of our Lord's earthly life, that out of the fourteen passages which the Lord actually quotes from the prophets and the psalms, not one alludes to a *prediction* as directly fulfilled in Him. On the other

hand He recognized that His mission was "to fulfil" their ideals, and thus He constantly makes use of their prophecies to illustrate or enforce His own teaching, or to describe the nature and character of His work. He also recognizes the typical character of the experiences of the Old Testament saints (especially as recorded in the Psalter), and connects His own history and personality and claims with the figures of the good shepherd, the servant of Jehovah, and the son of David—while in one case He suggests not obscurely that in Him will be found the highest illustration of the paradox of the Messianic kingdom.¹

Finally, these claims must be co-ordinated with His frequently expressed conviction of the divinely ordained preparation for His coming, through scriptural revelation, and of the Divinely ordered *necessity* that in Him all the Scriptures should find their deepest and completest fulfilment.

To this statement of our Lord's attitude to prophecy as it is to be gathered from the quotations assigned to Him in the gospel of St. Mark (which has every right to be considered as the nearest approach to the "Ur-evangelium"), the passages which the non-Markan document puts in His mouth contribute some important additions, for in them

(1) Our Lord definitely describes Himself and His works of mercy in the language of the Messianic age, intending, as we can see from the context, to represent Himself as the Messiah;

(2) He does not shrink from applying to Himself passages of Scripture hitherto exclusively appropriated to describe the purpose or the coming of Jehovah.

¹ Ps. cxviii. 22. Man's rejection, God's selection.

We will now complete this part of our subject by adding the direct quotations attributed to our Lord by single evangelists. Of such, omitting for the moment the Sermon on the Mount, and also apocalyptic passages where our Lord almost unconsciously, we may suppose, employed the language of prophecy, St. Matthew has three (one twice quoted), and St. Luke an equal number. They are in Matthew—Hos. vi. 6 (*bis*), Jonah i. 17, Ps. viii. 2 ; in Luke—Is. lxi. 1 ff., Is. liii. 12, Ps. xxxi. 5.

The three latter, as we have already indicated, may be accepted without reserve. They may be arranged as follows :

(1) Ps. xxxi. 5 may be placed among the many reminiscences of the Psalter which fell from our Lord's lips during His passion.¹ Its appropriateness in His mouth is obvious, but it is not to be regarded as exactly a quotation ; nor does it possess any claim to be regarded as a fulfilment except in so far as His use of the Psalmist's language may be held to show that He also experienced the Psalmist's anguish, and manifested anew the Psalmist's faith.

(2) Is. lxi. 1 f. constitutes "the lesson" which our Lord read in the synagogue of Nazareth at the opening of His ministry.² It told of the prophet's endowment and the prophet's task ; his task, the

¹ *Into thine hand I commend my spirit* (Ps. xxxi. 5, + *Father*, Lk. xxiii. 46).

² *He opened the book and found the place where it was written, The spirit of the Lord is upon me because he anointed me to preach good tidings to the poor. He hath sent me to proclaim release unto the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to proclaim the acceptable year of the Lord* (Lk. iv. 18, 19).

proclamation of redemption and restoration to God's people; his endowment, the unction of Jehovah's spirit. Our Lord claims this prophecy as directly fulfilled in Himself, and by stripping the original words of their dispensational colouring¹ He is able to use them as descriptive of His own work of salvation. *To-day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears.*

(3) We come next to Is. liii. 12, which was quoted by our Lord before He left the upper room with His disciples. He sorrowfully contrasts the joyous confidence with which the Apostles went forth on their first mission with the mournful nature of what even now awaits them. With melancholy irony He bids them purchase arms to defend themselves and Him from the coming attack. He must die like a rebel. *For I say unto you that this that is written must needs be fulfilled in me, namely, And with the transgressors he was numbered.* Our Lord does not say that the passage was written concerning Him; what He does say is that this Scripture concerning the Servant of Jehovah must have its fullest and final accomplishment (note the aor. inf.) in Himself.

These passages which St. Luke alone records Christ as quoting, strongly corroborate our argument as to the use He made of prophecy. Not one of these is of a predictive character. *I commend my spirit. The spirit of the Lord is upon me. He was numbered.* Our Lord's fulfilments and accomplishments do not concern predictions so much as ideals. These ideals it had been possible for those under

¹ Our Lord omits the words, *the day of vengeance of our God.*

the Old Testament to conceive, but not to realize : but those conceptions embodied Divine truths the fulfilment of which was necessary to establish the reality of their inspiration. In Christ, if we are to believe His own words, they were *accomplished* and *fulfilled*, for He was all that the saint, the prophet, and the servant were ; yea, and much more, for in His single person He combined the experience of them all.

We must postpone to a later period the consideration of our Lord's quotations, given only in St. Matthew. We will, however, remark that whatever view we take of their origin, we see in them precisely the same phenomena which have already been noted in those occurring in the third gospel. The eighth psalm is quoted as embodying a Divine principle which found a special illustration in the incident of the children's welcome to our Lord.¹ Hosea vi. 6 enunciates one of the grandest ideas of prophetic teaching :² Jon. iii. 5, and even the much discussed Jon. ii. 1, are typical, not predictive.³

Only once in the fourth gospel does our Lord actually quote from the prophets,⁴ and then in connection with His work. He felt that it was His office to bring about that spiritual intercourse between all men and God which Isaiah had foreshadowed in his

¹ *Did ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise ?* Ps. viii. 2, Mt. xxi. 16.

² Hos. vi. 6, *I will have mercy and not sacrifice.* Quoted concerning the Lord's eating with publicans and sinners, Mt. ix. 13 ; plucking ears of corn on the Sabbath, Mt. xii. 7.

³ The fate and preaching of Jonah, Mt. xii. 40, 41.

⁴ Is. liv. 13 = Jn. vi. 45. (Note : it is written *in the prophets*—a general allusion illustrated by a special quotation.)

description of the glorification of Zion. *Thy children shall be all taught of God.*

The Psalter he cites more frequently.¹ The first two instances He adduces to show respectively His justification for insisting on His Divine Sonship,² and the real explanation of His unmerited sufferings.³ The third tells how even in the Old Testament men were fed with bread from heaven.⁴ The fourth is only a reminiscence.⁵ We thus have reproduced in St. John's gospel precisely those characteristics of our Lord's citations of Psalter and Prophets which are also most marked in the other evangelists. There is but one solitary prediction, and that not of a future fact, but of a future state; of a principle rather than of an event. The others all refer to the past. *He gave them bread out of heaven. They hated me without a cause. I said ye are gods, etc. He lifted up his heel against me.* But the Lord recognizes in them all a prophetic significance, for they *prepared the way* for the union of God and man, and the idea of innocent suffering, which are two of the most profound thoughts of God's revelation in Christ.

But our Lord's acquaintance with prophecy is very far from being exhausted by the twenty-eight

¹ Ps. lxxxii. 6=Jn. x. 34. Ps. xxxv. 19=Jn. xv. 25. Ps. lxxvii. 24=Jn. vi. 31. Ps. xli. 9=Jn. xiii. 18.

² Ps. lxxxii. 6, *Is it not written in your law, I said ye are gods?* Jn. x. 34.

³ Ps. xxxv. 19, *But that the word may be fulfilled that is written in their law, They hated me without a cause,* Jn. xv. 25.

⁴ Ps. lxxvii. 24, *As it is written, He gave them bread out of heaven to eat,* Jn. vi. 31.

⁵ Ps. xli. 9, *That the scripture may be fulfilled. He that eateth my bread, lifted up his heel against me,* Jn. xiii. 18.

quotations which we have considered. His references and allusions to the prophetic writings are extremely numerous, and cover an extensive area. For our present purpose it will be sufficient to note some of the most important.

We select the following instances: Jonah iii. 1, Ezek. xxxiv. 23, Is. liii. 11, Zech. ix. 11, Jer. xxxi. 31, and Dan. vii. 12.

(1) Jonah iii. 1 f. belongs to the non-Marcan document. *As was Jonah to the Ninevites, so also shall be the son of man to this generation.*¹ But what was Jonah to the Ninevites? The context will make it plain. *The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with the men of this generation and will condemn it. For they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and behold a greater than Jonah is here.* Jonah's sign to the Ninevites consisted in his preaching of repentance—it was in this that his significance as a type of Christ lay. Jesus claims to represent Jonah, just as He asserts that John the Baptist represented Elijah. Once more, fulfilment is spiritual and typical, not mechanical and formal; it consists, not in a repetition of bygone events, but in the reincarnation of old ideas, though the Lord is careful to point out how far the reality transcended the type.

(2) Ezek. xxxiv. 23,² together with xxxvii. 24,³

¹ Mt. xii. 41, Lk. xi. 30.

² *I will set up one shepherd over them, even my servant David. He shall feed them and he shall be their shepherd.* (Compare also Ezek. xxxiv. 15, 16 with Lk. xv. 3, 7.)

³ *They and my servant David shall be kings over them (no more two nations, neither two kingdoms any more at all, 22), and they all shall have one shepherd.*

and perhaps Is. lvi. 8,¹ seem undoubtedly to underlie our Lord's description of Himself as *the good shepherd*. That He has been influenced by the phraseology of these passages, and also to a certain extent by their ideas, there can be no question. But the influence extends far deeper. Let us observe in particular four of the prophetic thoughts which our Lord by His allegory claims to fulfil.

(1) The shepherd in Ezekiel, from the description of whose work and character our Lord derived the materials for His own portrait, is none other than Jehovah Himself: the sheep are His people, Israel.

(2) But by Jehovah's side appears another shepherd who so perfectly represents Him that no very clear line of demarcation is drawn to distinguish their several functions. This shepherd is the Messiah—*David*, he is termed—the first shepherd-king of Israel.

(3) The idea of unity is most prominent throughout the whole passage. The context speaks not merely of the restoration but of the reunion of the whole nation of Jehovah's people. They shall be *one nation under one shepherd*.

(4) Our Lord's final allusion to the *other sheep not of this fold* is surely a reference to Is. lvi. 8, one of the most forcible anticipations of a universal religion to be found in the Old Testament.

When, therefore, the allegory of the good shepherd is placed in its true relation to the Old Testament thoughts from which it originated, we see how immensely it gains in significance. Our

¹ *Yet will I gather others unto him besides his own that are gathered.*

Lord must have felt that He was accomplishing that which prophecy had assigned to Jehovah as His own work. He must have identified Himself with that good shepherd—the *second David*—of whom the prophet had foretold that he would yet arise to be the perfect representative to Israel of Jehovah's care and goodness. Lastly, we discern how He took up into the body of His own teaching those ideas of unity and universality which, as we have seen, figured so largely in the prophet's visions of the kingdom of God.

(3) Is. liii. 10, 11, 12¹ That our Lord had been led to meditate on this chapter in connection with His own passion, as containing the clearest expression of the great truth that suffering must be the inevitable precursor to victory for any true servant of God in the course that he would be called on to pursue in the midst of this disordered world—so much appears from His citation of the twelfth verse of this chapter in Lk. xxii. 37.² That He further realized the unique significance for Himself of the idea of the Servant of Jehovah appears not only in the quotation to which we have just alluded, but also in the fact that He appropriated for His own use the opening words of the Psalm devoted to the present anguish and future glory of Jehovah's Servant.

It is not therefore far-fetched to see in the words, with which, according to St. Matthew and St. Mark,

¹ *He shall make his soul an offering for sin . . . By his knowledge shall my righteous servant make many righteous, and he shall bear their iniquities . . . he poured out his soul unto death . . . and bare the sin of many.*

² *He was reckoned with the transgressors.*

the Lord instituted the last supper, a reference to the same circle of ideas. *And he took a cup and gave thanks and gave it to them . . . and said, This is my blood of the covenant that is shed for many.*¹

The expression ὑπὲρ πολλῶν is, of course, not opposed to ὑπὲρ πάντων, but it nevertheless strikes us as a remarkable phrase in the mouth of Christ just at the moment when His mind must have been filled with the universalistic ideas that doubtless held a place in His conception of the new covenant which He was then inaugurating.

But this is not the only instance of its use. On a previous occasion, the Lord had declared that the ideal He had set before Himself was δοῦναι τὴν ψυχὴν αὐτοῦ λυτρὸν ἀντὶ πολλῶν.² Now, it does not seem to have occurred to commentators that this passage must surely embody a reference to Is. liii. 10. *He shall make his soul (i.e. his life) an offering for sin,* where we have the very thought implied in our Lord's saying. It may be noted further that LXX translates the שִׁים by δοῦναι (the word used by our Lord). But who in Isaiah are the recipients of the blessings flowing from this offering for sin? *By his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many.* This seems to be the original passage which suggested to Christ and His apostles the work which Christ wrought *alone*, and the *many* for whom He wrought it.

A further confirmation of this view will be found in a study of the contexts of LXX and the gospels. Our Lord had spoken of the suffering and exaltation which were to be His lot; but He was then

¹ Mk. xiv. 24, Mt. xxvi. 28.

² Mark x. 45, Mt. xx. 28.

led on by the contentions of His disciples to point out the true ideal for humanity—it was to be δούλος πάντων. Now in LXX we find in the same sentence which speaks of the sacrifice the Servant will make, a reference to the manner of His working, εὖ δουλεύοντα πολλοῖς (Is. liii. 11, LXX).

Lastly, if we accept as genuine the words of St. Mt. τὸ αἷμά μου . . . ὑπὲρ πολλῶν εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν,¹ and compare this with liii. 12, αὐτὸς ἁμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκεν, we have the most convincing proof that our Lord, when speaking of the sufferings of the Son of man in relation to those for whom He suffered, and especially at the institution of the Eucharist, intended to imply that in Him had been fulfilled all that had been written of the work and character and destiny of the sinless Servant of Jehovah.

(4) Zech. ix. 11, and (5) Jer. xxxi. 31.

The words τὸ αἷμα τῆς διαθήκης used by our Lord with reference to *the cup* contain an undoubted allusion to the inauguration of the Sinaitic covenant, to which, at the Passover, the minds of all would necessarily be directed. But there is no reason to suppose that they would not also have suggested the same phrase, as it is used by Zechariah, who brings it into the closest connection with the advent of the Messianic king—a prophecy which had received so circumstantial a fulfilment in our Lord's entry into the holy city a few days previously.²

¹ If we consider this as a gloss by the evangelist, the probability still remains that by *the many* for whom the Saviour's blood was shed our Lord intended a reference to Is. liii.

² Zech. ix. 11, *As for thee also, because of the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit.*

In the true text of the Gospels there is no mention of the fact that the covenant is a new one. Such a qualification would have been unnecessary because obvious. Our Lord, inaugurating this covenant with His Blood, abolished that which was originally instituted, and daily renewed, with *the blood of bulls and goats*. He cannot have used the term "covenant" in this context as He did, without a conscious reference to *the new covenant* of Jeremiah, to which such glorious hopes and promises were attached.¹ This covenant which *Jehovah will make in those days* is now a fact. *This is my blood of the covenant, which is shed for many (for the remission of sins*, Mt. only; see p. 468—a deliberate allusion to Jer. xxxi. 34).

(6) We have reserved until now Daniel vii. 35, not only because it is the last passage to occur in the Synoptic narrative, but also because of its intrinsic importance. The discussion of this passage really resolves itself into the question, what does our Lord mean when He speaks of Himself as the Son of man?

It has recently been denied that our Lord ever identified Himself with *the Son of man*. This view is based on the observation of certain facts:

(i.) That *the Son of man* is really equivalent to "a man." In Aramaic it was necessary to express this simple idea by a paraphrase, and thus we find נִשְׂאָ בֶרֶךְ invariably used to denote no more than

¹ Jer. xxxi. 31 ff., *I will make a new covenant; I will put my law in their inward parts . . . I will be their God and they shall be my people; they all shall know me; for I will forgive their iniquity and their sin will I remember no more.*

"a human being." A survival of this use occurs in Mk. iii. 28, πάντα ἀφεθήσεται τοῖς υἱοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων (Mt. xii. 21, τοῖς ἀνθρώποις), which shows that its use is at any rate not impossible in the Gospels.

(ii.) That the meaning of the phrase on our Lord's lips often demonstrably includes a reference to the powers and functions of ideal humanity.

(iii.) That the Lord always speaks of this Son of man in the third person. (The *ἐγώ* in Mt. xvi. 13 is wanting in the true text.)

(iv.) That the Son of man appears to be a double figure, at one time already come, at another time destined to come. It cannot, therefore, be held to refer to Himself, and must be considered as an ideal personification.

But this view cannot be sustained: (iv.) is entirely valueless. Is the kingdom not to be regarded as having a real existence because of the antithetical language employed to describe its present imperfections and its future glory? (i.) is equally indecisive; while (iii.) is a natural consequence of (ii.) which in its turn explains precisely the reason why the title was adopted by our Lord. A detailed examination of the passages where our Lord uses the name may be held to establish the following position:

(i.) Our Lord employs the title to emphasise His oneness with man. He has come to be the Son of man among the sons of men—to share their sorrows, to enlarge their hopes, to redeem their failures, to fulfil their destiny.

(ii.) His use of the term, therefore, on several occasions is intended to convey the idea of the

true position and prerogatives of ideal humanity whose representative He was.

(iii.) The Son of man has come, must suffer and die and rise again, and finally will return in glory.

(iv.) There are cases when only a forced exegesis can deny that our Lord identifies the Son of man with Himself though occasionally its use may suggest the inclusion of others.

(v.) The Messianic reference is very often not to be discerned, and, we may add, apparently not always intended.

Now, of all the passages where the title is used, none is more important than when in answer to the High Priest's question—*Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed*—Jesus replied, ἐγὼ εἰμι καὶ ὁψεσθε τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου καθημέρον ἐκ δεξιῶν τῆς δυνάμεως καὶ ἐρχόμενον μετὰ τῶν νεφελῶν τοῦ οὐρανοῦ.

What do we learn from this quotation and the context in which it is embedded?

- (1) Our Lord openly identified Himself with the *Son of man*.
- (2) And connected His use of the title with its occurrence in the book of Daniel.
- (3) And attached to the expression a definitely Messianic sense in view of its use in that book.

Now with regard to our Lord's application of this prophecy to Himself, we note once more :

(i.) The deep spiritual instinct which led Him to interpret all the Divinely ordained sufferings and triumphs of the Jewish people in the light of His own experience.

(ii.) We observe that it was in the language of an

Old Testament prophet that He first unequivocally asserted His claim to be the Messiah.

(iii.) We realize that in this, one of the most important predictions of the Old Testament, the complete fulfilment would be deferred till He came again in glory.

What, then, shall we say of our Lord's use of prophecy?

The first thing that stands out absolutely clear is that He did not regard it as a series of predictions which were to be reproduced in His own life with scrupulous exactitude. On the contrary, we have seen that of His quotations and references an overwhelming majority entirely lack any predictive character. Prophecy was to Him of profound significance, but this significance did not consist for Him in the marvellous correspondence of circumstantial forecasts with the actual events of His own life, but in the far more wonderful announcement of Divine truths which alone made the understanding of that life possible.

This will explain our second point, namely the repeated insistence of Christ on the truth that all prophecy (in which He included far more than the writings of the canonical prophets) must be fulfilled in Him. Our examination of the passages which He quotes, or to which He refers, has furnished us with the most conclusive evidence as to what He meant by *the necessity* of fulfilment. Every word of God to man must have more than a temporary significance: in Christ's teaching it received the completest because the most spiritual fulfilment: every endeavour on the part of man to live or to believe,

or to hope or to suffer, or to endure or to triumph, in accordance with the purpose of God, remains of eternal interest, and must find in Him who came to experience all the religious strivings of mankind, and carry them to a victorious consummation, its fullest accomplishment. It will be seen how this belief of our Lord in the necessary fulfilment of Scripture, recognizes the essential character of prophecy, on which we have always insisted, as an instrument intended *to prepare the way* for Him in whose person and work and teaching the prophetic ideals received the highest embodiment and realization.

Two more points remain to be noticed, though both of them have been implicitly dealt with in the previous paragraphs—namely, the extent, and the character of the fulfilment which our Lord claimed that prophecy had received in Him. With regard to the *extent* we may observe that our Lord altogether repudiates the notion that He fulfils a few isolated predictions here and there. *He takes prophecy as a whole, and claims to fulfil it all.* His is the God-enflamed zeal of the prophet, the love of the shepherd, the patience of the saints, the heroism of the martyrs, the righteousness of the king, the holiness of the priest. He is *all in all*. In Him alone prophecy as a spiritual and historical phenomenon finds its reasonable explanation. In Him alone its types and teachings attain to completion: in Him its ideals are carried into the sphere of actual life.

When we enquire as to the *nature* of the fulfilment we note that the Lord expressly warns us against a slavish adherence to the letter. That was what

made *searching the scriptures* so unprofitable to the Jews. He urges a spiritual interpretation. John the Baptist is *Elijah, if ye will receive it*. He Himself refuses to be associated with an unthinking acceptance of the dogma of Messiah's Davidic origin. He pointedly asks His disciples *how* the Scriptures refer to a suffering Messiah—an expression plainly intended to lead them from the letter of Scripture to its spirit. This is the keynote of all His own interpretation. In the spirit rather than in the letter He identifies Himself with the Son of man, and the Son of David : the suffering Servant and the prophet of repentance : the mediator of a new covenant and the founder of a kingdom of God upon earth. For while *the letter* must constantly be adapted to meet the varying circumstances of different ages, *the spirit* is eternally the same ; and therefore the fulfilment of prophecy is the most exact and the most complete, where its spiritual significance is most fully exhausted, however little this fulfilment may seem to correspond with the original sense of its literal interpretation.

In conclusion we must notice that our Lord freely applies to Himself passages which in the Old Testament are referred directly to Jehovah. This is most important, not only as indicating our Lord's own consciousness of Divine origin and authority, but also as providing the justification for the same method of interpretation which originally led the Apostles to an apprehension of His true nature.

Such then is our Lord's attitude to prophecy, and such the argument He derives therefrom in support of His own claims. We have endeavoured to subject all the passages in which we may discern His belief

on this point to a thorough examination. If it could be shown that our interpretation of prophecy was in conflict with that adopted by our Lord, we should have to reconsider our decisions, and attempt a reconstruction of our argument; for to every Christian scholar the Lord Himself must be the supreme authority in all matters of revelation. But we hope that our own conclusions have been shown to be in the most complete accord with the teaching of Jesus Christ. He regards prophecy as a whole, and sees its truest evidential value in the fact that it *prepared the way* for the true appreciation of Himself and of the kingdom which He set up on earth. *If they hear not Moses and the prophets,* are His words, *neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead*¹—a sentence which history provides with the fullest and saddest verification.

¹ Lk. xvi. 31.

PART VII.

THE USE OF PROPHECY BY THE EVANGELISTS.

OUR Lord had emphatically directed attention to His *fulfilment* of the Old Testament Scriptures. His post-Resurrection teaching (according to St. Luke) was mainly concerned with the same topic. It is no wonder then that His disciples were led to take up the subject with vigour, and to point out those numerous correspondences which the life and the work of the Master seemed to offer with the picture which the prophetic forecast had delineated.

But there was another reason for the course they pursued in this respect. Jesus had claimed to be the Messiah, and as such had been rejected by His own countrymen; His view and theirs as to the office and character of Messiah were totally different; and it became imperative for the earliest preachers of the Gospel, in view of Jewish disbelief, to show that His interpretation was the correct one; that a study of His life would show that His claim to be the Messiah could be abundantly verified by the very striking coincidences it exhibited both with the spirit and the letter of the prophetic word.

Lastly, it should be remembered that as the argument from prophecy was specially directed to meet the attacks of the Jews, so it was for them that it would carry the greatest weight. If it could be proved to the Jews that Jesus fulfilled all the essential characteristics of the Messianic hope, this for them would amount to a demonstration of the reality of His Messianic claims. To the Gentiles, however, such arguments would be of a very secondary character: they would at most amount to a corroboration of their faith. To the Jew Jesus presented Himself as *the Christ*, to the Gentiles as *the Lord*. This will help us to understand why it is in books specially intended for Jewish readers that the allusions to prophecy predominate so largely over those found in authors who had Gentile Christians in view.

The original stories of our Lord's life were uninfluenced by any apologetic motives. They were written simply to lay before the early believers the main facts of our Lord's life and work. Thus the Marcan document, which seems to underlie the Synoptic tradition, contains but a single quotation of an Old Testament prophecy, or at the most two,¹ and that in connection with the Baptist, rather than with the Christ. It was not apparently even claimed as a fulfilment, but as an illustration of the beginning of the gospel. *The gospel of Jesus Christ* began (with the needful preparation) *as it is written in Isaiah the prophet. A voice of one crying in the wilderness—Prepare ye the way of the Lord.*² Nor in the course of its narrative does

¹ On Mal. iii. 1, see above.

² Mark i. 1, 2; Is. xl. 3.

it even allude to the fulfilment of prophecy in Christ save where the allusion comes in Christ's own mouth. But its account of the last scenes of our Lord's earthly life is plainly written under a deep sense of the fulfilment of the Scriptures in that crowning tragedy. There is indeed no direct citation, but the passage contains three indirect references to those psalms concerning the sufferings of the Servant of God, which, as we have seen, were in our Lord's own mind at the time. Two, indeed are from the very psalm whose language He adopted in the acutest hour of His agony. Let us now read the words of St. Mark describing what took place—*And they crucify him :*

ST. MARK.

LXX.

καὶ διαμερίζονται τὰ ἱμάτια
αὐτοῦ βάλλοντες κλῆρον
ἐπ' αὐτὰ τίς τί ἄρη.

διεμερίσαντο τὰ ἱμάτιά μου
ἐαυτοῖς καὶ ἐπὶ τὸν ἱμάτισ-
μόν μου ἔβαλον κλῆρον.

Ps. xxi. 19.

. . And they that passed by railed blasphemously on Him :

κινοῦντες τὰς κεφαλὰς αὐτῶν.

πάντες οἱ θεωροῦντές με
ἐκίνησαν κεφαλάς.

Ps. xxi. 8.

Then our Lord Himself cries out in the opening words of Ps. xxii. :

δραμὼν δέ τις γέμισας σπόγγον
ὄξους περιθεὶς καλάμῳ ἐπότιζεν
αὐτόν.

εἰς τὴν δίψαν μου
ἐπότισάν με ὄξος.

Lxviii† 22.

The simple and natural introduction of these anonymous references into the course of the writer's unvarnished narrative is conclusive against any theory that the latter is based on or moulded by

the former. They show, however, that the earliest Christians soon saw in the passion a direct fulfilment of the sufferings of the ideal saint and servant of God. We cannot doubt for a moment that even the details of the passion were providentially ordered to correspond with the Psalmist's description of his own distress. This outward accomplishment was designed to call the attention of the disciples to the more momentous *fulfilment* of its inner significance.

But if the Marcan document contains but scanty allusions, and those few and far between, to the fulfilment of prophecy, the non-Markan document is even more reticent. With the solitary exception of Ps. xci. 2, which occurs in the mouth of the tempter, there is not a single reference to any of the psalms or prophets on the part of the narrator himself. His object was solely historical; apologetic considerations do not enter into his plan; and accordingly he remains silent both as to the prophetic preparation for Christ's advent, and as to its historical realization in the life of Jesus.

St. Luke is equally silent on the subject. Theophilus could not be expected to appreciate such allusions. In the whole of his gospel he never appeals to prophecy once (of course we do not take account of those passages which he has taken over from the words of our Lord or from the Marcan document); nor indeed does he refer to it, save perhaps in his account of the crucifixion, where the words, *all his acquaintances stood afar off*,¹ seem to contain a reminiscence of Pss. xxxviii. 12, and lxxxviii. 9.

¹ Luke xxiii. 49.

But in the first and fourth gospels the case is very different. St. John records the ministry of Jesus to *the Jews*, especially those of Jerusalem. He does not conceal from us the objections they advanced to the admission of His claims. *Said not the scriptures that out of the seed of David and from Bethlehem, the village where David was, cometh the Messiah?*¹ These objections he does not trouble to remove. Every Ephesian Christian who knew the rudiments of the evangelic tradition—and it was for such that his gospel was written—would be able to answer them himself. Perhaps also St. John did not attach much importance to such outward coincidences: his was the spiritual gospel, and to him the outward fact was only of value if it illustrated the essential idea.

St. John quotes the prophets four times altogether, twice in illustration of our Lord's teaching and twice in dealing with the events of His life.

(1) He shows how the Jews' rejection of our Lord's message was part of the Divine plan. God had always foreseen this result: it had been typically fore-shadowed in the experience of the prophets: it must find its culmination in the rejection of Christ, the perfect Prophet, the only one who could ever fully *declare the Father*. In support of this melancholy reflection he quotes in chapter xii. two passages from the book of Isaiah, liii. 1 and vi. 10²—the latter of

¹Jn. vii. 42, of Micah v. 2 and Ps. lxxxix.

²These are both cited as illustrating the disappointing conclusion of Christ's ministry of love, Is. liii. 1, *Lord, who hath believed our report, and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed?* Is. vi. 10, *He hath blinded their eyes, he hath hardened their heart lest they should see with their eyes, etc.*

which had been actually utilized by Christ for the same purpose, while the former is specially significant as an indication that St. John recognized in Jesus the figure of the suffering servant.

(2) The other two prophecies are cited in illustration of events in our Lord's life. The triumphal entry of our Lord into Jerusalem is so obviously parallel to the account of the advent of the Messianic king in Zech. ix. 9 that we can hardly doubt that it was an intentional fulfilment on the part of our Lord, who by His significant act showed to all who had eyes to see that in Him they beheld the Messiah, the king of Israel.¹

The second passage is also from Zechariah.² St. John has just recorded that Jesus escaped the usual indignity of the breaking of legs to which crucified criminals were usually subjected, but that one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side to make quite sure of His death.³ Now these two remarkable details as to the manner of the Lord's death suggested, *and were intended to suggest* (*iva*), a double reference to the Old Testament.

The Law had forbidden the mutilation of the Paschal lamb, as it was a sacred offering to God. *Ye shall not break a bone thereof.*⁴ The phrase had been spiritually applied by the Psalmist⁵ to God's preservation of the righteous man, *He keepeth all his bones, so that not one of them is broken.*

But this incident also suggested a fulfilment of prophecy. Zechariah had spoken of the *piercing* of God⁶ in the murder of the good shepherd, who

¹ Jn. xii. 14, 15; Zech. ix. 9. ² Zech. xii. 10. ³ xix. 32-37. ⁴ Ex. xii. 46.

⁵ Ps. xxxiv. 20. ⁶ For the reading, see above, p. 243 note 3.

was His perfect representative. *They shall look unto me (or unto him) whom they pierced.* The piercing of the side of Christ called to mind, and intentionally so, this text, and indeed the whole prophecy of which it forms a part.

The citation of these passages with reference to the death of Jesus are intended to let the reader see how even in His death Jesus fulfilled all the symbolism of the law, and the teaching of the prophets. "For the two passages quoted are not to be regarded only as isolated quotations, but also as indicating the two great lines of preparatory teaching to which they severally belong"¹

St. John also twice quotes the psalms, both times in reference to acts of our Lord's life. The second passage—Ps. xxii. 18—is a formal citation,² where the Synoptists only have an informal allusion; the first tells us that at the cleansing of the temple the disciples remembered that it was written, *The zeal of thine house shall consume me.*³ In our Lord's righteous indignation at the desecration of the house of prayer, the Apostles saw not so much the fulfilment of a prediction, as the highest manifestation of that burning love for God's house which characterized the original author of the psalm.

The fulfilment of Scripture which St. John indicates in the Saviour's words, *I thirst*, xix. 28, is of the same nature. St. John does not mean that our Lord spoke the word with the object of accomplish-

¹ Westcott, *St. John*, p. 280.

² xix. 24, *That the scripture might be fulfilled which saith, They parted my garments among them, and upon my vesture did they cast lots.*

³ ii. 17, P. lxix. 9.

ing the letter of prophecy, but rather that by His speaking the word, the Scripture was fulfilled. It was part of the Divine counsel that all the agony of the servant of Jehovah should find its fulfilment in Christ. The allusion is of course to Ps. lxix. 21.

So far all has been plain—when prophecy is quoted at all, it is generally in reference to the fulfilment of its ideas; when the accomplishment of any circumstantial details are noted, it is to the spiritual rather than literal coincidence that our attention is called. The one clear exception is Zech. ix. 9: there the main stress seems to be laid on the outward correspondence of fact with prophecy—but rightly so. For Christ seems deliberately to have set Himself to fulfil the prophecy in the letter, as a sign to all that He also claimed to fulfil it in the spirit.

We now come to St. Matthew, whose whole gospel is pervaded by the idea that in the historical life of Jesus prophecy has been completely fulfilled. Indeed his evident desire to find a prophetic reference on every possible occasion to some event in our Lord's life constitutes one of the most difficult and grave problems of literary criticism in the interpretation of the gospel narrative—a problem which we may note involves very serious theological considerations.

St. Matthew introduces into his gospel no less than eleven direct citations of the prophets, and also two of the psalms to which he attaches a prophetic significance.

These citations must be individually examined, as their interpretation will have an important bearing

on the literary side of the question, and also because it is the use of prophecy, to which currency was given by St. Matthew's gospel, that finally dominated all Christian exegesis as to its original significance and ecclesiastical interpretation :

(1) The whole history (τοῦτο ὅλον) of the circumstances attending Christ's Virgin Birth took place in order that Isaiah's prophecy of Immanuel should be fulfilled.¹ St. Matthew's argument is based on the assumption that the gist of the prophecy lies in the Virginity of the Mother. He accordingly cites LXX ἡ παρθένος (= הַמְּצִיחָה). But we have seen that the idea of virginity cannot claim any justification from the Hebrew original.

(2) St. Matthew places in the mouth of the wise men, whom Herod consulted about the birthplace of Christ, a citation of Mic. v. 2. The words differ both from the Hebrew and LXX, but as the variations do not touch the central idea that the Messiah should be born at Bethlehem, they need not detain us. The prophecy is cited as corroborative of the inference drawn by the elders (οὕτως γὰρ γέγραπται).²

¹ *Now all this is come to pass that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet saying :*

*Behold the virgin shall be with child and shall bring forth a son,
And they shall call his name Immanuel.*

Mt. i. 18-25, Is. vii. 14.

² *He enquired of them where the Christ should be born. And they said unto him in Bethlehem of Judaea—for thus it is written by the prophet :*

*And thou Bethlehem, land of Judah,
Art in no wise least among the princes of Judah :
For out of thee shall come forth a governour,
Which shall be shepherd of my people Israel."*

Mt. ii. 5, 6, Micah v. 2.

(3) The flight into Egypt, and the return at the death of Herod, took place in order that the words of Hosea, *Out of Egypt have I called my son*, might be fulfilled.¹ Here the Evangelist follows the Hebrew in preference to the LXX, which rightly glossed בְּנִי by τέκνα ἐμοῦ. This would have been unsuitable for St. Matthew's purpose. He cares nothing for the application of the words to Israel, and so he prefers that translation in which the original sense may not obtrude itself. The words are obviously not future or prophetic (*I called*), but historical, and at the most typical. Of course, it is possible to read into the "prophecy" ideas of suffering and deliverance; but there seems little doubt that to St. Matthew their literal fulfilment appeared by far the most important.

(4) The murder of the holy Innocents furnishes him with an opportunity to quote again.² This time he takes a passage from Jeremiah describing the inconsolable grief of Rachel (the mother of Israel) for her children. The original passage con-

¹ *He arose and took the young child and his mother to Egypt . . . and was there till the death of Herod, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophet, Out of Egypt did I call my son.*

Mt. ii. 16, Hosea xi. 1.

² *Then was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet:*

*A voice was heard in Ramah,
Weeping and great mourning,
Rachel weeping for her children;
And she would not be comforted, because they are not.*

Mt. ii. 17, 18, Jeremiah xxxi. 15.

cludes with a beautiful promise of comfort and restoration. *Thus saith the Lord:*

*Refrain thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from tears;
For thy work shall be rewarded, saith the Lord,
And there is hope in thine end,
That thy children shall come again from the land of the enemy.*

Jer. xxxi. 16, 17.

This the evangelist entirely omits: he isolates the passage from its context, and points to the fulfilment of its least significant half. But St. Matthew does not place this prophecy in the same category as some of the others. He simply states that the massacre of the children of Bethlehem was a fulfilment of the words (τότε ἐπληρώθη). This may be so; but the application strikes us as somewhat forced and arbitrary; and no student of the sacred text can doubt for a moment that in its original context it commends itself far more as a message from God, or that in its primary appreciation it received a far more adequate fulfilment than that which St. Matthew sees in the words.

(5) The residence at Nazareth was a fulfilment of those prophecies which declared that *he shall be called a Nazarene*. But no such prophecies exist. It is probably to be referred to the oracle in Is. xi, where the Messiah is called *Neser* (נֶזֶר). Nor have we any right to ridicule St. Matthew's allusion. Even the practical Amos,¹ not to mention the poetical Jeremiah,² employs a play upon words to direct the reader's attention to a spiritual truth. This kind of exegesis had been thoroughly popularized by the Midrashic system of allegorical interpretation,

¹ Amos viii. 2.

² Jer. i. 11, 12.

which diligently sought for hidden meanings in the most unpromising places. St. Paul, too, on more than one occasion allows himself the liberty of indulging in this kind of exposition. Thus St. Matthew's reference, however far-fetched it may appear to us, was in thorough keeping with the spirit of the age. To him no event in the life of the infant Christ was without deep significance. Was the dwelling at Nazareth a mere accident? Surely not. God who ordered all Messiah's history must have intended some religious lesson to be learnt even from this apparently simple fact. Those who had ears to hear would detect the resemblance of Nazareth, "the Branch City," to that title with which Isaiah had dignified the Messianic prince. This then was the reason for His sojourn in the obscure village—that when men spoke of Jesus of Nazareth their minds would by an easy transition be led to meditate on Jesus the *Neser*, predicted in one of the greatest of the Messianic prophecies.

In defending St. Matthew from the captiousness of some of his critics, we do not necessarily endorse his interpretation of the text. The most that we would imply is that although, judged by our standards, the value of St. Matthew's citation for apologetic purposes is practically worthless, yet such a reference may not have been without its worth for the evangelist's contemporaries, and could be fully justified by the exegetical methods of the age in which he lived.

(6) When Jesus moved northwards into Galilee it occurred to St. Matthew that the words of the prophet, Is. viii. 23, ix. 1, had received an unexpected

and striking accomplishment.¹ Isaiah, in predicting the dawn of the Messianic salvation, had specially singled out *the land of Zebulon, and the land of Nephthali, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, the circuit of the nations*, as the earliest recipients of its blessings. As these had felt most acutely the gloom and distress of the Assyrian invasion, so should they be the first to experience the joy of deliverance. If we cannot with St. Matthew regard our Lord's northward move as undertaken *in order to fulfil* the letter of this prophecy, we may yet recognize the appropriateness of the citation as a suggestive poetical illustration of this period of our Lord's ministry.

(7) The Lord's unfailing sympathy and constant readiness to perform His works of mercy on the sick who were brought to Him, suggested to the evangelist a most beautiful parallel with the Servant of Jehovah, who *himself took our infirmities and bore our sicknesses*.² The context seems to show that St.

¹ *Now he withdrew into Galilee; and leaving Nazareth he came and dwelt at Capernaum, which is by the sea in the borders of Zebulon and Nephthali; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet, saying,*

*The land of Zebulon, and the land of Nephthali,
Toward the sea, beyond Jordan,
Galilee of the Gentiles,
The people which sat in darkness saw a great light,
And to them which sat in the region and shadow of death,
To them did light spring up.*

Mt. iv. 12-16, Is. viii. 23, ix. 1.

² *And when even was come they brought to him many possessed with devils . . . and he healed all . . . that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet:*

Himself took our infirmities and bare our diseases.

Mt. viii. 17, Is. liii. 4.

Matthew interpreted the words ἦρεν and ἐβάστασεν in the sense of removing and bearing away. This is certainly not the meaning of the original. But the prophecy is true to an extent of which St. Matthew was perhaps hardly aware—for the Saviour took away our diseases and sins, by taking them on Himself.

(8) St. Matthew then was prepared to identify our Lord with the suffering Servant of Jehovah who forms the central figure in the prophecies of Deutero-Isaiah.¹ We cannot therefore be surprised that he returns to the topic. He finds an opportunity in the Lord's withdrawal to the sea to avoid accentuating His quarrel with the Pharisaic party. Our Lord's meekness on this occasion seemed an appropriate occasion to introduce a contrast between the Christ of prophecy and the Christ that the Pharisees expected. He therefore quotes at length (though with one unaccountable omission)² the glowing words with which the prophet of the exile introduces his conception of the ideal Servant. St. Matthew has here seized on a true prophetic estimate

¹ *The Pharisees took counsel against him; and Jesus perceiving it withdrew from thence; and many followed him, and he healed them all and charged them that they should not make him known; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through Isaiah the prophet,*

Behold, my servant whom I have chosen,

My beloved in whom my soul is well pleased (to the end of the prophecy):

He shall not cry nor strive aloud;

Neither shall anyone hear his voice in the streets.

Mt. xii. 14-21; Is. xlii. 1-4.

² *He shall not fail nor be discouraged till he have set judgement in the earth, Is. xlii. 4a.*

of our Lord's life, though he seems to limit its fulfilment to the particular instance which suggested to him its application to the work and character of Christ.

(9) We have seen that in the Synoptic tradition our Lord Himself appealed to prophecy in support of His parabolic teaching.¹ St. Matthew adds a further reference to Ps. lxxviii. 2, to illustrate the same characteristic of His method. The citation is an independent translation from the Hebrew, but its use here is suggested by the word *παραβολή*, which in the LXX replaces the Hebrew מִשְׁל. The force of the quotation appears to consist in this verbal coincidence, but it really lies far deeper. Christ, the wise teacher, naturally adopts those methods which the inspired saints of the Old Testament had found to be in accordance with the principles of Divine revelation.

(10, 11) The next prophetic references occur in the description of our Lord's public entry into Jerusalem.² This really was a fulfilment of the

¹ *All these things spake Jesus in parables unto the multitude, and without a parable spake He nothing unto them: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet, saying,*

I will open my mouth in parables;

I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world.

Mt. xiii. 34, 35, Ps. lxxviii. 2 (LXX).

² *Now this is come to pass, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken through the prophet, saying,*

Tell ye the daughter of Zion (Is. lxii. 11),

Behold thy king cometh unto thee,

Meek and riding upon an ass,

And upon a colt the foal of an ass (Zech. ix. 9).

Mt. xxi. 4, 5.

letter of Scripture, of no dubious character, and as such must have been peculiarly acceptable to the writer of the first gospel. The evangelist's quotation of this passage will be the subject of subsequent investigation; here we would only remark on the conflate character of the text as he has given it. The words εἴπατε τῇ θυγατέρι Σιών occur, not in Zechariah, but in Is. lxii. 11. It seems as though St. Matthew is anxious to crowd into this single episode more than one reference to the words of prophecy.

(12) The fulfilment of Zech. ix. 9 may very likely have suggested the further allusion to the writings of the same prophet.¹ The traitor Judas had bargained with the chief priests for thirty pieces of silver in consideration of his services with regard to our Lord's betrayal and arrest. The mention of this paltry sum immediately recalled to St. Matthew the prophetic representation of the betrayal of the good shepherd to be found in Zech. xi. 12, 13. The question as to how far this may be considered a fulfilment of the letter as opposed to the spirit of prophecy will have to be considered later.

(13) The last quotation is from Ps. xxii. 8, which the evangelist, without employing any formula of citation, places in the mouth of those who stood by

¹ *Judas . . . cast down the thirty pieces of silver into the sanctuary and went and hanged himself . . . and the chief priests bought with them the potter's field. Thus was fulfilled that which was spoken through Jeremiah the prophet, saying,*

And they took the thirty pieces of silver, the price of him that was priced, whom certain of the children of Israel did price, and they gave them for the potter's field as the Lord appointed me.

Mt. xxvii. 3-10; Zech. (not Jeremiah) xi. 12, 13.

the cross mocking our Lord.¹ The fact that this passage does not occur in the other gospels, though their accounts of the crucifixion are full of reminiscences of the same psalm, seems to lend colour to the hypothesis that St. Matthew does not shrink from attributing to others words and phrases by which he hoped to bring out the meaning of the original speakers in the light of that fulfilment of prophecy of which he himself is so indefatigable an exponent.

The forced and arbitrary use of prophecy in St. Matthew's gospel suggests two most important questions to which we must now address ourselves.

(1) Did his own fondness for seeing a prophetic reference to the events of our Lord's life lead the evangelist to add any interpretative glosses on our Lord's words with a view to illustrating his favourite thesis?

(2) Is it possible that his own interest in this respect has led him to re-cast in the light of prophecy some of the facts of the gospel narrative? Or, to state the question in the more trenchant form in which it is sometimes proposed, Can we be sure that his anxiety to present Jesus as the Messiah of Hebrew prophecy has not led him to insert into his gospel, traditions concerning our Lord's experiences which may be wholly destitute of any historical foundation?

These questions cannot be evaded : they must be

¹ *The chief priests mocking him said, . . . He trusteth on God, let him deliver him now, if he will have him.*

Mt. xxvii. 41-43 ; Ps. xxii. 8

faced, and, if possible, answered. We will take them in the order in which they are suggested.

I. That this is at any rate sometimes the case is shown by xiii. 14, 15, where our Lord quotes Is. vi. 9, 10 with much greater fulness than He is recorded to have done in the corresponding sections in the other gospels. Of course if our Lord quoted the passage at all, as there can be no reasonable doubt that He did, He must have had the whole of it in His mind, even if He actually quoted only one verse. Accordingly we may say that St. Matthew's form of our Lord's citation is justifiable—though He appears to depart from *ipsissima verba* of Christ.¹

Another instance would be the insertion of ὁ προφήτης to call attention to the prophetic character of Jonah² and Daniel,³ from whom our Lord wishes to draw a lesson for his hearers.

Again, we may refer to two striking instances⁴ which tend to show that St. Matthew did not hesitate to re-cast our Lord's words where he considered their original form to be open to serious misunderstanding. One of these bears directly on the question now before us. St. Mark had introduced our Lord as asking, *How did the scriptures foretell a suffering Messiah?*⁵ Now St. Matthew apparently knew no such passage (yet cf. viii. 17); accordingly this reference to prophecy is carefully eliminated—and the Lord, according to him, after calling attention to the death of John Baptist, predicts a similar case for

¹St. Luke, it is true, continues the quotation of Is. xl. 3 so as to include a reference to the universality of the gospel, but this citation is his own, not our Lord's.

²xii. 39. ³xxiv. 15. ⁴xix. 16, xvii. 12, 13. ⁵Mk. ix. 12.

Himself. *Even so will the Son of man suffer at their hands.*

Again, the obscure phrase, ἀλλ' ἵνα πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαί—(our Lord's words at His arrest, as recorded in the second Gospel) becomes in the first greatly enlarged and placed in an entirely new context. Our Lord rejects the idea of seeking the help of the angels. πῶς οὖν πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαὶ ὅτι οὕτως δεῖ γενέσθαι; he then gives the words of Jesus complaining of His arrest, and concludes τοῦτο δὲ ὅλον γέγονεν ἵνα πληρωθῶσιν αἱ γραφαὶ τῶν προφῆτων.¹

Occasionally his glosses are very important. Thus the cup at the last supper is *my blood of the covenant that is shed for many* εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν.² If these words really stood in the original narrative, how could we account for their disappearance from all the other passages which describe the institution of the Eucharist? We conclude that they are a gloss, though a correct gloss, of the evangelist to bring out the Lord's intention more clearly, and to connect the covenant which he founded in His Blood with the *new covenant* of Jeremiah's prophecy, whose chief characteristic would lie in the fact that *I will forgive their iniquities and their sins will I remember no more.*³

Another illustration of the same habit may be seen in the word ἐπροφήτεον,⁴ inserted by St. Matthew to show the true significance of the Lord's words that *the law and the prophets (were) until John.* To St. Matthew their existence was for the

¹ Mt. xxvi. 54, 56.

³ Jeremiah xxxi. 34.

² Mt. xxvi. 28.

⁴ Mt. xi. 13.

purpose of *prophesying*, and, supposing this to have been our Lord's meaning, he boldly inserts the word.

But perhaps the most striking way in which we can bring home to ourselves this characteristic of the first Gospel is to place side by side the Sermon on the Mount as given by St. Matthew and the parallel passages recorded in St. Luke. It may then be seen at a glance that, while the former is full of allusions to the prophets and psalms, the latter is remarkably silent as to all such references. Next we may notice that these allusions hardly ever add any substantive matter to the discourse: they are nearly always of an explanatory character. Thus *the poor* whom our Lord blesses in St. Luke (cf. James ii. 5, which contains an obvious reference to this saying in the phrase οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ κόσμῳ) become in St. Matthew *the poor in spirit* (οἱ πτωχοὶ τῷ πνεύματι),¹ an expression which introduces a reference to Is. lxi. 1, which is made still clearer by the next blessing on *those that mourn, for they shall be comforted*, which replaces Luke's *Blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh*, and practically amounts to a citation of Is. lxi. 2.² Or, to take another instance, while in St. Luke our Lord says He will reject those that ate and drank with Him, in St. Matthew these workers base their claim to recognition, in the language of Jeremiah, on the fact that *we have prophesied in thy name*.³

These facts may be held to establish the position

¹ Mt. v. 3; contrast Lk. vi. 20.

² Mt. v. 4; contrast Lk. vi. 21.

³ Mt. vii. 22; Jer. xxvii. 15; contrast Lk. xiii. 26.

that St. Matthew did allow himself to be influenced by his prophetic leanings in the report he gives us of our Lord's discourses. We can now proceed to discuss the genuineness of the three quotations of prophecy which are peculiar to St. Matthew's reports of our Lord's words.

(1) The first is Hos. vi. 6. This occurs twice, ix. 13 and xii. 7. It is not the kind of passage which the evangelist would have quoted. On the other hand it exactly reproduces the whole spirit of our Lord's work and teaching upon earth. Its double occurrence also makes for its authenticity, though it may not have been spoken twice. The evangelist may have found the text assigned to the Lord, and not knowing its exact position, might have inserted it in the two places where it seemed most appropriate.

(2) The next quotation is Ps. viii. 2. It springs most naturally from the context: and the fact that it is introduced with a formula of citation¹ which we know our Lord to have used on more than one occasion, and not with that usually employed by the evangelist, makes for its genuineness.

Why, then, are these two passages omitted by St. Luke? We cannot tell. We can only say that we know from his treatment of the Marcan document that he omitted such references to prophecy as he considered superfluous, or unsuitable to his readers.

(3) We now come to *the sign of the (prophet) Jonah*.² The non-Markan document from which this passage is taken understood by *the sign of Jonah*

¹ Mt. xxi. 16, οὐδέποτε ἀνέγνωτε ;

² Mt. xii. 38-42.

as we see from Luke the prophets preaching to the Ninevites and their repentance,—a significant hint that the Gentiles would prove more receptive of Christ's teaching than were His own people. But in St. Matthew a remarkable insertion is made: ὥσπερ γὰρ ἦν Ἰωνᾶς ἐν τῇ κοιλίᾳ τοῦ κήτους τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας οὕτως ἔσται ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου ἐν τῇ καρδίᾳ τῆς γῆς τρεῖς ἡμέρας καὶ τρεῖς νύκτας.

The words spaced are a direct quotation from Jonah i. 17 (ii. 1). Now many circumstances combine to render the genuineness of this clause very suspicious.

- (i.) It is absent from the parallel passage in St. Luke.
- (ii.) It interrupts the sequence of thought.
- (iii.) It is just the sort of sign which the Lord declared that this generation should not see. The signs according to Him are moral, not miraculous.
- (iv.) It is, however, a quotation from prophecy which would be most welcome to the evangelist.
- (v.) The phraseology betrays a curious resemblance to the language of xvii. 12¹ which, as we have seen, is due to the deliberate intention of the evangelist to add force and point and smoothness to our Lord's words.

On the other hand, it may be argued that *three days* would never have suggested itself in connection with the Lord's death and resurrection, had it not

¹ οὕτως καὶ ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ ἀνθρώπου μέλλει πάσχειν ὑπ' αὐτῶν (for Mark ix. 12, πῶς γεγράφται ἐπὶ τὸν υἱὸν τοῦ ἀνθρώπου, ἵνα πολλὰ πάθῃ;).

been for the influence of prophecy. This may be admitted—but the reference would not appear to be to Jonah, but to Hosea vi. 2 where the words mean no more than “quickly,”¹—a passage which our Lord probably had in His mind during the conversation recorded in John. ii. 18-20.²

We conclude, therefore, when we take into consideration St. Matthew’s freedom in altering and adapting our Lord’s words, that this verse may never have been spoken by Him at all, but may have been introduced by the evangelist in accordance with that view of prophecy which he himself held, with the intention of elucidating the meaning of the Lord’s reference to *the sign of the prophet Jonah*.

II. We must now consider the second question, namely, whether St. Matthew’s view of prophecy influenced his record of the facts of gospel history—a question to which our previous discussion will have formed a kind of introduction. We will begin by taking two indisputable instances:

(1) St. Matthew alone of all the evangelists speaks of a colt being with the ass on which our Lord entered Jerusalem. This colt appears wherever the ass is mentioned, and, indeed, so completely dominates his description of the scene, that he can actually write the following sentence: *καὶ ἐπέθηκαν ἐπ’ αὐτῶν τὰ ἵμάτια καὶ ἐπεκάθισεν ἐπάνω αὐτῶν*,—³ a manifest impossibility. Why then is this “colt” introduced, and why is it treated as of such import-

¹ *After two days he will revive us; on the third day he will raise us up.*

² *Destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up.*

³ Mt. xxi. 7.

ance? An answer is suggested by the form of the quotation, as it is given by St. Matthew :¹

ἰδοὺ ὁ βασιλεὺς ἔρχεται σοι
πραῦς καὶ ἐπιβεβηκὼς ἐπὶ ὄνον
καὶ ἐπὶ πῶλον υἱὸν ὑποζυγίου.

The original Hebrew is

וְהָיָה עַל-מִמְּוָה יֵלֵךְ עַל-עֵר בֶּן-תַּחֲנִינִי²

St. John abbreviates, but gives the right sense ἐπὶ πῶλον ὄνου.³ St. Matthew, however, mistakes the parallelism of Hebrew poetry, for the mention of two distinct animals—and the conclusion seems irresistible that he introduces the colt with the ass, in order to make his narrative correspond more closely with the details of the prediction as he conceived them.

(2) Few would deny that the description of the place to which Jesus withdrew, after hearing of John's execution, is deliberately coloured so as to make clearer the correspondence with the prophecy he is about to quote. The original account appears to have run καὶ ἦλθεν εἰς Γαλιλαίαν καὶ εἰσπορεύονται εἰς Καφαρναούμ.⁴ This in St. Matthew becomes ἀνεχώρησεν εἰς τὴν Γαλιλαίαν—καὶ κατέκησεν εἰς Καφαρναούμ τὴν παραθαλασσίαν ἐν ὁρίοις Ζαβουλὼν καὶ Νεφθαλείμ. The reason for this elaboration is obvious. To quote St. Matthew's own words, it is ἵνα πληρώθῃ τὸ ῥηθὲν διὰ Ἡσαΐου τοῦ προφήτου λέγοντος Γῇ Ζαβουλὼν καὶ γῇ Νεφθαλείμ, ὁδὸν θαλάσσης κ.τ.λ.⁵

It is true that we have not here a modification of

¹ Mt. xxi. 5.

² Zech. ix. 9.

³ Jn. xii. 15.

⁴ Mk. i. 14, 21 cf. Lk. iv. 14, 31.

⁵ Mt. iv. 12-16.

fact, but we have a modification of language in describing our Lord's movements which is scarcely less suggestive.

(3) The third instance concerns the repentance and fate of Judas. A totally different account of the same event is given in the first chapter of the Acts. In particular *a potter's field* is mentioned in the gospel, as to which the Acts is quite silent. Can we account for the difference? Probably we can. St. Matthew's view of the whole transaction is coloured by his recollection of a prophecy which he quotes very loosely, and wrongly attributes to Jeremiah.¹ The passage in Zechariah speaks of casting the money to the potter in the house of the Lord. From this text was probably evolved the account of Judas casting the money εἰς ναόν, and the story of the purchase of the potter's field, neither of which incidents are alluded to by St. Peter.

But if St. Matthew moulds the story to correspond with the prediction, he no less alters the prophecy to suit the circumstances of his narrative. In Zechariah, the act is that of the prophet himself: but as St. Matthew tells the story it is the chief priests who make the purchase. He, therefore, takes the LXX ἔλαβον (*I took*) as third pers. plur. instead of first pers. sing., and alters ἔδωκα into ἔδωκαν accordingly, though he does not trouble to remove the μοι in the final clause, which obviously refuses to be harmonized with the rest of his quotation.

Lastly, we observed, when dealing with this passage in its original context, that *the potter* rested on

¹ Mt. xxvii. 9.

a textual error for *the treasury*.¹ We cannot therefore regard the words as being fulfilled in the details of St. Matthew's narrative, though, as we have already stated, the prophecy may rightly be regarded as Messianic, and as finding in Christ its most tragic illustration and completest accomplishment.

But do not these admissions involve us in the most serious difficulties? Do they not discredit the whole gospel? Shall we not be driven to adopt "the mythical theory," which sees in the events of the life of Jesus nothing but the figments of a later age constructed out of materials selected for that purpose from prophetic literature?

To this we have a double answer. In the first place, it will have been noticed that with the exception of the first two chapters no new fact is introduced into the evangelical narrative on the sole strength of a prophetic reference. We can observe St. Matthew's method in those cases where he follows the Synoptic tradition. He takes the main facts as they stand, and these he adorns and illustrates by his scriptural quotations. We must therefore presume that this was his method in cases where he was independent of the Marcan narrative; that is to say, having found the facts, he then proceeds to show their correspondence with the word of prophecy. Secondly, the very weakness of the quotations as "an argument from prophecy" makes strongly for the historicity of the facts in support of which the prophecies are adduced. It is inconceivable that the prophetic references which can at times be only made to agree with the events of the

¹ See above, p. 233.

gospel by a violent and unsatisfactory exegesis could have suggested the creation of a series of imaginary facts to which they but faintly correspond. The case was just the reverse. The fact suggested the application of texts which would otherwise have never been heard of; though we cannot deny that the prediction once found may have reacted on St. Matthew's narrative of the original story.

But even so, are we not assuming a most dangerous position in regard to the inspiration of the sacred narrative? The question may be met by a reference to the preface to the third gospel, a perusal of which suggests that even an inspired historian may err when his materials are deficient.¹ Of course the two cases are not strictly parallel; but the passage in question disposes of the dogma of the absolute inerrancy and infallibility of Scripture—an argument even now sometimes employed to stifle the legitimate exercise of historical criticism. Indeed, fanciful theories of *verbal* inspiration, though almost universally abandoned in regard to the other books of Holy Writ, still cling, as it were, to the skirts of the gospel on which they have for so long retained their pertinacious hold. But God speaks to men in a language they can understand, and viewed in this light St. Matthew's gospel accomplishes a most useful function. To us his quotations may seem both trivial and forced; but to his own contemporaries they would be invested with the greatest importance. *We* are happily not dependent upon

¹ ἔδοξε κάμολι παρηκολουθηκότι ἀνωθεν πᾶσιν. When such opportunities for thorough investigation are wanting, presumably mistakes are possible "to me also."

prophecy for our belief in the facts of the gospel—we believe them because they are supported by sufficient historical evidence: but to the Jews of that day the argument from prophecy was all in all; to them, all depended on a demonstration that Jesus corresponded to the Messiah of the Old Testament. The first gospel was designed in the providence of God to meet the needs of men in this direction,—but it still serves a useful purpose. Not only does it give us a unique glimpse into the mind of the early Church, but even its quotations from prophecy possess an evidential value, though it be very different from that which St. Matthew intended. For, in the way which we have explained above, they may be judiciously used as the basis of an argument for the historical character of the events to which they are supposed to refer.

We would not have our attitude to St. Matthew's gospel in this respect mistaken. It is the work of a devout Jew whose mind was engrossed with the Messianic expectations of his people, and steeped in the language of Old Testament prophecy, where those hopes found expression. His intense interest in the testimony of *the scriptures* to the coming deliverer quickened his perception of coincidences between the historical life of Jesus and the predictions of those who had foretold His advent. Such correspondences were full of spiritual value to himself; he took a delight in seeking them out; he felt that they could not be accidental, but that they were providentially designed to silence objectors and strengthen belief; he determined to hand on to others the fruits of a study which had been so

helpful to his own faith ; and hence his gospel is largely written to show that *all these things were done that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the Lord through the prophets.*

We have long since realized that the value of the fourth gospel is enhanced rather than diminished, by the fact that the author sets the words and actions of his Master in the light of many years of Christian experience. In like manner we should be grateful for the record of the life of Christ as it impressed the earliest Jewish believers for whom the first evangelist compiled his gospel, and for the view of prophecy which he shared with all those who *waited for the consolation of Israel.*

TABLE A.

QUOTATIONS OF AND REFERENCES TO THE PROPHETS AND THE PSALMS COMMON TO ALL THE SYNOPTISTS.

ORIGINAL PASSAGE.	ST. MARK.	ST. MATTHEW.	ST. LUKE.
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QUOTATIONS.

Mal. iii. 1	i. 2	xi. 10	i. 76, vii. 27
Is. xi. 3	i. 3	iii. 3	iii. 4
Is. vi. 9	iv. 12	xiii. 14	viii. 10
Ps. cxviii. 25, 26	xi. 9	xxi. 9	xix. 38
Is. lvi. 7	xi. 17	xxi. 13	xix. 46
Jer. vii. 11			
Ps. cxviii. 22	xii. 10	xxi. 42	xx. 17
Ps. cx. 1	xii. 36	xxii. 44	xx. 42
Is. xxxiv. 4	xiii. 24	xxiv. 29	xxi. 26

REFERENCES.

Dan. iv. 12	iv. 32	xiii. 32	xiii. 19
Mal. iv. 5	ix. 12	xvii. 11	i. 17
Is. v. 1	xii. 1	xxi. 33	xx. 9
Dan. ii. 28	xiii. 7	xxiv. 6	xxi. 9
Ps. xix. 2	xiii. 8	xxiv. 7	xxi. 10
Mic. vii. 6	xiii. 12	x. 21, x. 35	xxi. 53
Dan. vii. 13	xiii. 26	xxiv. 30	xxi. 27
Jer. xxxi. 31	xiv. 24	xxvi. 28	xxii. 20
Zech. ix. 11			
(Ex. xxiv. 8)			
Ps. xxii. 7	xv. 29	xxvii. 39	xxiii. 35
Ps. xxii. 18	xv. 24	xxvii. 35	xxii. 34
Ps. lxix. 21	xv. 36	xxvii. 48	xxiii. 36

Two additional important references.

Deut. vi. 5	xii. 33	xxii. 37	x. 27
Lev. xix. 18	xii. 31	xix. 19	x. 27

TABLE B.
ANALYSIS OF THE REFERENCES IN TABLE A.

* Denotes that the citation also appears in the fourth gospel.

TABLE OF QUOTATIONS, ETC.				ANALYSIS OF QUOTATIONS, ETC.			
Quoted by our Lord.	Quoted by Synoptists.	Referred to by our Lord	Referred to by Synoptists.	By our Lord.	By Synoptists.		
(Mal. iii. 1)	* Ps. cxviii. 25	Dan. iv. 12	Ps. xxii. 7	(i.) Concerning Himself. Ps. cxviii. 22 Ps. cx. 1 Dan. vii. 13	(i.) Concerning the preparation for His coming. Is. xl. 3*		
Is. vi. 9	Is. xl. 3	Is. v. 1	xxii. 18				
Is. lvi. 7	* The use of this psalm by the pilgrims who welcomed our Lord in His triumphant entry into Jerusalem can perhaps hardly be regarded as a quotation by the evangelists, though it is very noticeable that they all agree in giving the transliteration of the Aramaic form מְשִׁיחָא for Hebrew מָשִׁיחַ in place of Ἰησοῦς δῆ.	Dan. ii. 28	Ps. lxxix. 21	(ii.) Concerning His kingdom. Is. vi. 9 (Mt. the fullest)* Dan. iv. 12 Is. v. 1	(ii.) Concerning incidents in His life (Ps. cxviii. 25) ^a Ps. xxii. 7 Ps. xxii. 18* Ps. lxxix. 21(^a)		
Jer. vii. 11		Is. xix. 2					
Ps. cxviii. 22		Micah vii. 6		Concerning His work. Zech. ix. 11 Jer. xxxi. 31 (Ex. xxiv. 8)	Indeterminate passages concerning John the Baptist. (1) Mal. iii. 1. Quoted by our Lord in Mt., Lk., but cited by Mk. himself in a different connection; either the verse in Mk. is an interpolation by an early reader of true reading ἐν τῷ προφητῇ or Mt., Lk. did not quote it with Is. xl. 3, as the verse occurred later in the non-Markan document, in the mouth of our Lord. There can be no doubt that it was spoken by our Lord at some time of His ministry.		
Ps. cx. 1		Deut. vii. 13					
Is. xxxiv. 4		Zech. ix. 11		(iii.) Concerning His teaching. Is. lvi. 7 Dt. vi. 4 Jer. vii. 4	(2) Mal. iv. 5, by Gabriel in Lk., by our Lord in Mt., Mk.; St. Lk. having already alluded to the words saw no reason to repeat them. The Judaic character of the introductory verses would have been of little interest to Gentile readers.		
		(Ex. xxiv. 8)					
		Jer. xxxi. 31		(iv.) To enforce His teaching. Is. lvi. 7 Dt. vi. 4 Jer. vii. 4			
				(v.) Merely verbal. Dan. ii. 28 Is. xix. 2 Micah vii. 6			

TABLE C.—THE QUOTATIONS, ETC., OF OUR LORD.

BY WHOM CITED.	CONCERNING HIMSELF.		CONCERNING HIS KINGDOM.		CONCERNING HIS WORK.		ENFORCING HIS TEACHING.		APOCALYPTIC.		VERBAL.		TOTAL.		GRAND TOTAL.
	PROPHET.	PSALM.	PROPHET.	PSALM.	PROPHET.	PSALM.	PROPHET.	PSALM.	PROPHET.	PSALM.	PROPHET.	PSALM.	PRO.	PS.	
A THE MARCAN DOCUMENT															6+3*
	i. Common to Synopsists	Dan. vii. 12	cx. 1	Is. vi. 9					Is. xxxiv. 4		..	..	4+3*	2
	ii. Common to Mt. and Mk.	Zech. xiii. 7	xxii. 1	..					Dan. xiii. 14		..	xlii. 5	4+1*	2	
	iii. Preserved only by Mk.	..	..	..	..	..	..	..	Is. lxvi. 24 Jer. v. 21	..	..	..	2	..
TOTAL =															14+4*
B THE NON-MARCAN DOCUMENT															3+1*
	i. Common to Mt. and Lk.	(See above for its being placed here.)													
	ii. Preserved only in Mt.	..	..	viii. 2	..	..	Hos. vi. 6	..			..	..	1	1
	TOTAL =	1	..	1		+1*		..			1	..	4+1*	1	
C INDIVIDUAL EVANGELISTS															5+1*
	i. St. Luke	(Is. lxi. 1)													
	ii. St. Matthew?	Is. liii. 12	..	..	Is. lxi. 1	..	..	..			..	xxxi. 5	2	1
	iii. St. John	Jonah ii. 1	lxxxii. 6 xxxv. 19 lxix. 5	..	Is. liv. 13 Ez. xxxiv. 23 xxxvii. 24 Is. lvi. 8*	lxxviii * 24 }	..	..			..	..	1	..
TOTAL =															9+1*
GRAND TOTAL =															18+6* 10 28+6*

There are great numbers of these, but it is impossible to say how far they are conscious or unconscious quotations and references.

* Denotes an important reference or allusion rather than actual quotation.

PART VIII.

THE USE OF PROPHECY BY THE OTHER WRITERS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

WE have now completed our investigation into the fulfilment of prophecy as it was understood by the Lord Himself and the evangelists who record His life and teaching. With the exception of St. Matthew, whose peculiar standpoint we have endeavoured to appreciate, they are unanimous in regarding prophecy as most truly fulfilled, not in the exact correspondence of the event with any circumstantial predictions, but in the Lord's appropriation and accomplishment of Old Testament hopes and ideals. "There is a certain ambiguity about the word 'fulfil' (*πληρῶσαι*)," used by Christ Himself in this connection. But there can be no ambiguity about its significance in His mouth. "We may safely neglect the meaning which perhaps comes first to mind, that of personal obedience or performance, as we speak of the fulfilment of an injunction. It is, rather, to bring to fulness or completion, involving therefore a progress; it is not to keep a thing as it was."¹ In this sense Christ's

¹ Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, 15.

teaching—revolutionary as it must often have appeared to those best acquainted with the Old Testament scriptures—was a fulfilling of the doctrines of the law and the prophets. He seized upon their spiritual principles, and while discarding any dispensational features, enlarged their scope and accomplished their purpose by adapting them to the needs and requirements not only of His own age, but of the Church for all time. Similarly Christ's life and death constituted the final fulfilment of all those hopes and disappointments which the experiences of saints and martyrs had engraven on the hearts of the Old Testament prophets. The woes, the struggles, the popular contempt, *the despitefulness of the proud*, the rejection by the hierarchy, and yet at the same time the assurance of God's election, the confidence in Divine assistance, the triumph through suffering, the victory through humiliation—all had been foreshadowed in the treatment that the chosen people had meted out to those commissioned by the wisdom of God to speak to them in the name of Jehovah of hosts. The Son of man did indeed go, as it was written. In His own life, and in His own character He concentrated all the truth of those inspired records of God's providential dealings in former days with His despised "servants" and persecuted prophets. And once more, in His person He actualized all those glorious aspirations for the reunion of God and man which lay at the base of every hope for the consummation of the theocratic ideal.

Such then is the nature of the "fulfilment" of prophecy claimed by Christ and the evangelists. It

does not imply a literal accomplishment of circumstantial details, but rather a bringing out to the full of those spiritual truths, which formed the permanent element of the old dispensation, a broadening of what was narrow, a completion of what was imperfect. And this idea of fulfilment carries with it "the ideal perpetuity of the old, the indestructibility of the law and the prophets"¹ which the Master was constantly at pains to emphasize.

We have now sufficient materials at our disposal to formulate our conclusions as to the evidential value of prophecy. For the sake of completeness, however, it will be well to consider the attitude to prophecy exhibited by the other writers of the New Testament.

§ I. THE ACTS.

Our attention is at once arrested by the interesting fact that all the quotations in this book occur in the speeches of others. St. Luke, true to the principle he adopted in *the former treatise*, avoids elaborating his work by introducing allusions which would be unintelligible to the majority of his Gentile readers. On the other hand, as the first outburst of Christian missionary zeal was directed to the conversion of the Jews, we cannot wonder that the argument from prophecy plays a conspicuous part in the earlier speeches of the Apostles and others, recorded by the historian.

The object of the earliest believers was to show to the Jews how mistaken had been that system of

¹ Hort, *Judaistic Christianity*, 28.

Messianic interpretation which had led them to fail to recognise in Jesus the Messiah whom the Scriptures foretold. Thus, the Apostles *ceased not preaching the good news that Jesus is the Christ.*¹ Similarly St. Paul, immediately after his conversion, *confounded the Jews that dwelt in Damascus, proving that this man is the Christ.*² Their recorded speeches show us how they were enabled to reach this conclusion.

The first utterance of St. Peter after the Lord's Ascension shows how firmly this belief in the Divinely ordered connection of the Old Testament with the events of the life of Jesus was established in the minds of the early disciples: *Brethren, it was needful that the scripture should be fulfilled which the Holy Ghost spake before by the mouth of David concerning Judas :*

*Let his habitation be made desolate,
And let no man dwell therein ;*

and

*His office let another take.*³

The circumstances in which these psalms were written are shrouded in obscurity. It is impossible to decide whether the writer expresses his own longing for vengeance on his personal enemies, or appeals to God to requite the malignant hostility of national foes, or prays that retribution may overtake the proud oppressors of the poorer class whom he may represent. The personal element, however,

¹ v. 42.

² ix. 22, the word *συμβιβάζων* seems to imply a comparison, presumably between the Messianic prophecies and the historical life of Christ.

³ Acts i. 15-20 ; Ps. lxix. 26, cix. 8.

cannot wholly be obliterated, and there can be little doubt that the fierce denunciations in which these psalms abound were inspired by actual circumstances. In their violent imprecations they breathe a spirit the very reverse of that which Christ sought to instil into His followers. How then can we justify their present application? We may, with Delitzsch, protest that "the anathemas are not on that account without moral worth or spiritual power. There is a divine energy in them as in the cursing and blessing of every man who is united to God. They have the same force as prophetic threatenings; and in this sense the New Testament looks upon them as fulfilled in *the son of perdition* (Jn. xvii. 12)." ¹ We may recollect that "the Psalmist is Jehovah's servant (28); his cause is Jehovah's cause; if he perishes Jehovah's honour will suffer (21); and his deliverance seems inevitably to involve the destruction of his implacable enemies." ² But these considerations are not sufficient in themselves to justify the impropriety of introducing such fearful imprecations into the circle of Christian thought, as we should be compelled to do if we regarded the psalm solely in the "typico-prophetic" sense, so largely advocated in some quarters.

How then shall we account for St. Peter's allusion?

(1) St. Peter believed, as did every Jew, in the fullest inspiration of the whole Psalter. These words he would have regarded as "not merely or mainly the utterance of a personal vindictiveness, but the expression of a burning desire for the manifestation

¹ Delitzsch, *Psalms*, vol. iii. 153.

² Kirkpatrick, *Psalms*, 653.

of the righteous judgment of God upon those who resisted His will and persecuted His servants.”¹ He would therefore see “in the recent miserable end of the traitor another evidence not only of the general truth which the Psalmists learnt through suffering that God rewarded His servants, and that confusion awaited the unrighteous, but also another fulfilment in the case of Judas of the doom which the Psalmists of old had invoked upon the persecutors of the faithful servants of God.”²

(2) We must be careful to attach the proper meaning to *ἔδει πληρωθῆναι*. We have seen above the significance to be attached to this phrase. “Not only is our Lord the subject of direct predictions in the Old Testament, but His claims go to the full extent of affirming that all the truths which are imperfectly and frequently very darkly shadowed forth in its pages are realized in Him as the ideal to which they pointed.”³ What former saints had suffered—mental and physical agony, the treachery of friends, the gratuitous hatred of implacable enemies—that by a Divine necessity must the perfect Saint suffer. What men of old had achieved, that must the perfect Man victoriously accomplish. What finally awaited the enemies of the righteous in Old Israel—utter confusion and complete discomfiture—that must also be the eventual lot of the enemies of Him who was the perfectly righteous One.

(3) We should observe, moreover, that Jesus had Himself seen in the words of Psalm lxi. 4 (*ἐμίσησάν με δωρέαν*) a “fulfilment” of the bitter

¹ *Ibid.* 398.

² Knowling, *Acts*, p. 66.

³ Rowe, *Bampton Lectures*, 202 (quoted by Knowling *op. cit.*).

hatred that encompassed the suffering Servant of God.¹ He did not, however, by so doing stamp the whole psalm as applicable in all its details to Himself. In precisely the same manner St. Peter here illustrates the end of Judas, though he does not dwell upon his awful doom, and there is no justification for supposing that he intended to apply to his case all the terrible imprecations of the original psalm. It is not so much the fate of the traitor as the filling of his vacant office that chiefly engages his attention; and the citations thus deal with Judas from an official rather than personal point of view.

St. Peter's next speech was on the occasion of the outpouring of the Spirit upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost. He is again addressing a Jewish audience, and the object of his discourse is summarized in the concluding sentence: *Let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom ye crucified.* The sermon opens with a repudiation of the charge of drunkenness levelled against the Apostles by the more hostile section of the crowd. St. Peter ridicules the assertion, and invites his hearers to attentively consider the words of Joel, which give the true explanation of the wonderful phenomena they are privileged to witness.

This is that which hath been spoken by the prophet Joel:

*And it shall be in the last days, saith God,
I will pour forth of my spirit upon all flesh:*

¹ Jn. xv. 25. Cf. also 9 with Jn. ii. 17, and 21 with Jn. xix. 28-29; Mt. xxvii. 34-38.

And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,

*Yea on my servants and on my handmaidens in those days
Will I pour forth of my spirit [and they shall prophesy].*

And I will show wonders in the heaven above,

And signs on the earth beneath;

Blood, and fire, and vapour of smoke:

*The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into
blood,*

Before the great and notable day of the Lord come,

*And it shall be that whosoever shall call upon the name of
the Lord shall be saved.*

Acts ii. 16-21, Joel ii. 28-32, LXX.

Not a few important considerations are suggested by a careful study of this passage.

(1) St. Peter definitely connects the whole prophecy with the Messianic age, and boldly substitutes for the LXX *μετὰ ταῦτα* (which means no more than subsequently to the restoration of temporal blessings promised in the preceding verses), the phrase *ἐν ταῖς ἐσχάταις ἡμέραις* which was exclusively appropriated to the time of Messiah's advent in glory (cf. especially Is. ii. 2, Micah iv. 1).

(2) The universalistic tendency of the language of the original prophecy is still further emphasized by the LXX reading *ἐπὶ τοὺς δούλους μου κ.τ.λ.* The Hebrew words (*even upon servants* *עַל-עַבְדָּי*) seemed to restrict the Spirit's operations to the abrogation of all class distinctions within Israel. Any such limitation (whether intended by Joel or not) is entirely absent from the words as given in the Greek version which St. Peter here employs.

Now, while it is evident that it would be foolish

to expect in these earliest utterances of a Jewish Apostle that catholicity which is so marked a feature of St. Paul's doctrine, St. Peter's own belief in the ultimate possibility of the extension of the Messianic kingdom so as to include Gentiles within the scope of its blessings, seems hardly open to question. His attitude on this subject (so similar to that of the Lord Himself¹) was probably influenced to a very great extent by the consideration of such universalistic passages as the one here quoted in his first public discourse.

(3) We should especially notice that St. Peter quotes the prophecy in full. He does not omit those poetical features—*the sun turned into darkness, the moon into blood*—with which the prophet enhances the terror of the day of Jehovah. Nor does it seem to occur to St. Peter that the obvious non-fulfilment of the prediction relating to the dissolution of the heavenly host constitutes any bar to finding the essential accomplishment of the prophet's words in the events of the day of Pentecost. He plainly does not regard the introduction of such apocalyptic imagery as invalidating, or, indeed, as affecting, the main contention of his argument—that *this* which ye see and hear *is that which hath been spoken through the prophet Joel*. We are thus furnished with the strongest apostolic precedent for discriminating between the permanent and dispensational elements of prophecy, and for disregarding, when necessary, those apocalyptic features which the prophets, and especially the later

¹ Compare iii. 26, ὑμῶν πρῶτον ὁ θεὸς ἀνάστησας τὸν παῖδα αὐτοῦ Ἰησοῦν, with Mark vii. 27, "Ἀφες πρῶτον χορτασθῆναι τὰ τέκνα.

prophets, so frequently introduced into their descriptions of the *day of the Lord*.

(4) Finally, we should observe the direct application to Christ of a passage which in the original context speaks of Jehovah Himself. *The day of the Lord* had been proclaimed by all the prophets as the crowning manifestation of the righteousness of the God of Israel. Now, Jesus had explicitly taught that He would Himself come again, at the end of the world, as the Father's perfect representative, to judge both the quick and the dead, and the Apostles lived in daily, nay hourly, expectation of His coming. It thus became easy for them to connect those Old Testament prophecies which foretold Jehovah's advent with every incident which seemed to be preparatory to Christ's second coming. From this it was an easy step to transfer the language originally used of Jehovah, God of Israel, to Jesus Christ, through whom His judicial activity at "the consummation" would be perfectly mediated. The importance of this fact as an indication of how the Apostles were led to a full apprehension of the Divinity of Christ can hardly be overestimated. By applying to the ascended Christ words and phrases which hitherto never had been, and indeed never could be, addressed to any but the Divine Being Himself, the believers of the primitive Church were familiarized with those lofty conceptions of His Person and attributes which meet us in the earliest surviving records of Christian literature.

So here St. Peter, in reference to Christ, bids his countrymen call upon His name, and promises to all those that do so participation in the blessings of the

Messianic salvation. There can really be no doubt from the context that *Kύριος* is intended to refer to the ascended Lord. Men's minds were thus soon familiarized with this system of interpretation, which was widely adopted by the most diverse writers of the New Testament.¹

After claiming the descent of the Spirit as an indication of the dawn of the Messianic age announced by Joel, the Apostle deals with other crucial passages of the Old Testament, and strives to show that in Christ all such prophecies found their truest fulfilment. He naturally deals first with the resurrection.

Him God raised up, having loosed the pangs of death; because it was not possible that he should be holden of it. For David saith concerning him,

I beheld the Lord always before my face,

For he is on my right hand, that I should not be moved, etc.

. . . David both died and was buried . . . Being therefore a prophet (and knowing that God had sworn an oath to him that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his throne); he foreseeing this spake of the resurrection of the Christ, that neither was he left in Hades nor did his flesh see corruption.²

Two important questions are raised by this citation. In the first place, can the meaning of the original be possibly held to include a reference to an actual resurrection from the grave? And, secondly, to what extent is the validity of the argument dependent upon the correctness of the Apostle's assumption of the Davidic authorship of the psalm, or the lineal

¹ Cf. Heb. i. 10, Rom. x. 12, 1 Thess. *passim*, 1 Pet. iii. 14, 15.

² Acts ii. 24-31, Ps. xvi. 8-11 (see above, p. 495).

descent from David implied in 2 Sam. vii. 16, to which St. Peter calls such emphatic attention.

(1) The Psalmist was not expressing his belief in a future resurrection from the dead, but his confidence in his present deliverance (through Jehovah's protection) from a premature death. The word *flesh* does not signify the dead corpse but the living man ; and the whole reference is to this life, and not to any existence beyond the grave. But if we grant this, we do not thereby touch the propriety of the passage as quoted in this connection. For the Psalmist's unshaken faith in God, his unwavering trust that God would be able to deliver *his holy one* from the perils of death, his confident assurance that nothing could banish him from Jehovah's perpetual care and providence—all these high and noble thoughts found their most adequate fulfilment not in "David's" own experience, but in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Moreover, the communion between God and man, as portrayed by the Psalmist, is of so intimate a character that its dissolution at death was inconceivable. And hence the way was prepared for the victorious assurance of immortality conveyed to us in Christ's triumph over the grave when the third day He rose again, and, rising, *brought life and immortality to light*. The words thus have a meaning wider and deeper than that in which they were originally employed, and St. Peter was quite justified in asserting their fulfilment *in the resurrection of the Christ*.

But can such a sense have been present to the original author, as the Apostle seems to imply? *David being a prophet . . . foreseeing, spake of the*

resurrection of the Christ. We may answer that while we should not have expressed ourselves in this manner, St. Peter's main inference is quite legitimate. The words do go beyond the Psalmist's experience; they are perfectly fulfilled in Christ. To the Holy Spirit who spake through the prophets it must have been known that the noble expression of the Psalmist's faith would never be completely realized till He should come to whom all the prophets bore witness. And thus it is true to say that *David, being a prophet, spake of the resurrection of Christ.*

(2) St. Peter seeks to establish this position by a reference to *the oath that God had sworn to him that of the fruit of his loins he would set one upon his seat.* The reference is, of course, to 2 Sam. vii. 16, and Ps. cxxxii. 11. In both these cases a lineal descendant is promised to David, who should fulfil the ideals of the theocratic kingship. The language of the LXX in the former passage is particularly worthy of remark: καὶ ἔσται ἐν πληρωθῶσιν αἱ ἡμέραι σου καὶ κοιμηθήσῃ μετὰ τῶν πατέρων σου καὶ ἀναστήσω τὸ σπέρμα σου μετὰ σέ ὅς ἔσται ἐκ τῆς κοιλίας σου. The reference here to David's own death, and the use of the word ἀναστήσω to describe the *raising up* of his seed, may very likely have suggested to St. Peter the application of the whole passage to *the resurrection of the Christ.*¹ The words of the psalm would thus appear to gain immensely in appropriateness. *My soul, my flesh,* sang David, but though he died and saw corruption, he lived on in his seed. And therefore he might use the first personal pronoun, not in reference so

¹ Acts ii. 31, περὶ τῆς ἀναστάσεως τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

much to himself as to his lineal descendant. Thus ἡ σὰρξ μου—ἡ ψυχὴ μου in 26, 27 become in 31 ἡ ψυχὴ αὐτοῦ, ἡ σὰρξ αὐτοῦ. This seems to be the general line of St. Peter's argument. It makes two assumptions—the Davidic authorship of the psalm, and the Davidic descent of Jesus. It is quite impossible to dogmatize in either case. The Davidic authorship of the psalm has been defended by some scholars of repute; by others, it has been impugned. The Davidic descent of our Lord may have been a literal fact, but it is difficult to assume, consistently with a belief in the Virgin Birth,¹ that Christ was the Son of David in such a physical sense as to make it possible for the latter to speak of Him as *my flesh*.

We cannot, therefore, insist upon these additional proofs by which St. Peter seems to establish his main position. To his hearers who took for granted the Davidic origin of the Psalter, and who agreed as a matter of course that the Messiah would be the Son of David, such illustrations would have carried considerable force. St. Peter shared their beliefs; he and his hearers were on common ground; and it was to increase their faith that he pressed home the witness of the Old Testament Scriptures. It does not follow that the "proofs" possess for us the same value as they did for the men of that generation. St. Peter had in view the conversion of his own contemporaries, and to secure that end he employed arguments which he believed to be true, and knew to

¹ Both evangelists trace the Davidic descent through Joseph—which they would hardly have done if the Lord was in reality *the son of David* only through His Mother.

be effective. We must not quarrel with Providence for appealing to men by such arguments as they can best appreciate. After all, the conversion of St. Peter's contemporaries was as dear to the heart of God as the edification of a later age; and we shall have learnt nothing from our study of prophecy if we have not discovered that God as it were adapts the revelation of His wisdom to human circumstances, and always speaks to men in such language and through such instruments as they can at the time most easily and yet most thoroughly understand.

But we must not forget that St. Peter's main contention remains quite untouched. Viewed from a more general standpoint, it is clear that it does not make any appreciable difference whether David or another wrote this Psalm. The fact remains that the language of the Psalter transcended the experience of the Old Testament saints, and was never perfectly fulfilled save in Him who had been promised of old to David, and whose coming gave rise to all those glorious hopes and aspirations which meet us both in the prophets and the psalms.

Finally with regard to the *foresight* that St. Peter here attributes to David, we shall do well to recollect that, as the same Apostle testifies in another place,¹ prophetic consciousness does not imply a distinct knowledge of the events which the prophets foretold, "but only a conscious reference in their minds to the great promises of the covenant in the expression of which they were guided by the Holy Spirit of prophecy to say things pregnant with meaning not patent to themselves, but to us."²

¹ 1 Pet. i. 10-12.

² Alford, *Grk. Test.* vol. ii. p. 25.

Having now substantiated the fact of the resurrection by an appeal to prophecy, St. Peter proceeds to illustrate Christ's ascension and exaltation from the same source. *This Jesus did God raise up . . . Being therefore by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath poured forth this. For David ascended not into the heavens :* but he saith himself :

*The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand
Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.*¹

The report of the sermon is plainly much condensed : it becomes increasingly difficult to follow the course of the argument ; the connexion is distinctly perplexing ; in particular *therefore* and *for* seem to be somewhat out of place. It has been suggested with much plausibility² that St. Peter's original discourse contained a reference to another psalm, viz. Ps. lxviii. 16 (LXX lxvii.).

ἀναβὰς εἰς ὕψος ἡχμαλώτευσας αἰχμαλωσίαν
ἐλαβες δόματα ἐν ἀνθρώπῳ.

Now with this compare the words of St. Peter :

33. ὕψωθεις τὴν τε ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος
λαβὼν . . .

34. οὐ γὰρ Δαυεὶδ ἀνέβη.

Three of the words of the psalm are thus taken up, while verse 34 is both natural and appropriate if regarded as a caution against the application of a preceding quotation to David.³ It is some corrobora-

¹ Acts ii. 32-35, Ps. cx. i.

² Chase, *Credibility of Acts*, 151.

³ Cf. Alford's comment, "For David himself is not ascended into the heavens *as he would have if the former prophecy applied to him.*" What "former prophecy?" It could hardly refer to Ps. xvi.

tion of this view to find the psalm used by St. Paul in the same connexion. But though the possibility remains, we cannot proceed beyond conjecture.

The argumentative portion of the sermon concludes with the citation of Ps. cx. The Davidic authorship is assumed, but surely it is not indispensable to the validity of St. Peter's argument. As Bengel says, the hearers were confronted with a "dilemma. *Propheta loquitur aut de se aut de Messia. Non de se v. 29, ergo de Messia.*" Who the prophet was, is of comparatively little importance. What does matter is that such lofty expectations were utterly incapable of realization by any earthly king reigning in Zion. It was immediately felt that the Psalmist's glowing hopes could only be fulfilled by the coming Deliverer, and the Psalm was therefore universally regarded as Messianic. No justification is needed for its citation here to clinch the whole argument of the sermon. Only eight weeks previously it had been employed by the Lord Himself in His controversy with the hierarchy of Jerusalem.¹ He had, indeed, left the question of authorship entirely untouched; but in His own significant manner He warned His audience to penetrate to the spirit if they would learn the true meaning of the Psalmist's words. The spirit of prophecy is entirely independent of all critical and textual problems; and *the spirit of prophecy is the testimony of Jesus.*²

These remarks are necessary, inasmuch as our reaction from uncritical methods and mechanical views of prophecy might lead some to condemn too hastily St. Peter's references, and to deny the pro-

¹ Mk. xii. 35.

² Apoc. xix. 10.

priety of their application to Christ. We must remember that even the most spiritual truths may sometimes need to be expressed in terms suitable to a particular age. In fact, though truth itself never changes, its expression must necessarily be undergoing constant change. Such expression may at times appear to us very crude, very one-sided, very materialistic. The danger is lest we should confound the truth with those varying modes of its expression which are due to the diverse tendencies of different ages. Fashions of thought and modes of expression we may legitimately discard or develop, but the greatest care must be taken lest we should be tempted to give up the truth itself, because we find ourselves unable to agree with the manner in which it has been expressed by the teachers of other ages, accustomed to think on lines altogether different from those with which we are ourselves familiar.

Thus while not fully able to endorse the exact manner in which St. Peter uses his citations of prophecy, we can whole-heartedly admit that the passages he quotes are strikingly appropriate to the glorious resurrection of Christ and the coming of the Holy Ghost, while the great principles underlying these prophecies found a full and perfect accomplishment in Jesus. St. Peter needs no apology for closing his survey of the witness of the psalms and prophets to the history and Person of our Lord, by the dignified appeal with which his sermon ends. *Let all the house of Israel therefore* (i.e. taking into consideration the correspondence between the passages which I have quoted and the

actual life of Jesus Christ) *know assuredly that God hath made him both Lord and Christ, even this Jesus whom ye crucified.*¹

St. Peter's earnest words carried instantaneous conviction to a great number of those who heard him; and he was able to answer their anxious enquiries by telling them of the free and unrestricted character of the Gospel promises. *For to you is the promise and to your children and to those that are afar off.*² His words can hardly have failed to recall the promise of peace in Is. lvii. 19, *Peace to him that is far off and to him that is near, saith the Lord.* But perhaps this is no more than an accidental similarity of language.

The events of Pentecost were succeeded by the healing of the lame man at the beautiful gate of the Temple. The astonishment caused by this miracle gave St. Peter another opportunity of addressing the people and telling them of the mission and claims of Christ, and once more he makes copious use of the argument from prophecy.³

In the first instance we should notice the application to Jesus of the title *παῖς αὐτοῦ* (θεοῦ). Now it is not to be denied that the phrase to Hellenistic readers may have connoted the idea of Sonship; but our Lord and His Apostles invariably use *υἱός* when they wish to speak of the Divine Sonship. We shall therefore most likely be correct in taking the phrase to mean Servant of Jehovah (= עַבְדַּיְהוָה). The meaning of this phrase in the Old Testament we have already discussed at length.⁴ In the New

¹ Acts ii. 36.

² *Ibid.* 39.

³ Acts. iii. 12-26.

⁴ See chapter on "The Prophet."

Testament it occurs in the Magnificat and Benedictus, applied respectively to Israel,¹ and to David² (who is also thus designated, Acts iv. 25). It is also used in its directly Messianic sense in St. Matthew's quotation of Is. xlii. 1, ἴδου ὁ παῖς μου.³ The other places where it appears are all to be found in these early Petrine speeches, where the reference is invariably to the Lord Jesus.⁴ The use of the phrase ὁ δίκαιος as a synonym for our Lord in the next verse puts beyond dispute the reference to the righteous Servant in the later chapters of Isaiah.⁵

"If we bear in mind all that the Servant of the Lord meant for a Jew and for a Jew so well versed in the O.T. prophets as St. Peter, it becomes a marvellous fact that he should have seen in Jesus of Nazareth the realization of a character and of a work so unique. . . . For the portrait as a whole was one which transcended all experience, and the figure of the ideal Servant anticipated a work and a mission more enduring and comprehensive than that of Israel, and a holiness and innocence of life which the best of her sons had never attained."⁶

The fact that these Servant passages were in the Apostle's mind, will account for his next allusion to the prophetic preparation for the coming of Christ. *The things which God foreshowed by the mouth of all the prophets, that his Christ should suffer;*⁷ *he thus fulfilled.* He then goes on to speak of the forgiveness of sins for those who repent, of the exaltation

¹ Luke i. 54.

² Luke i. 69.

³ Mt. xii. 18.

⁴ Acts iii. 26, iv. 27, iv. 30.

⁵ Is. liii. 11.

⁶ Knowling, *Acts*, 110.

⁷ Acts iii. 18. Cf. esp. Luke xxiv. 46.

and second coming of Christ, of the consummation of all things—*whereof God spake by the mouth of his holy prophets which have been since the world began.*¹ He gives two special instances. Beginning from *Moses* he quotes the Divine promise to Israel of never being left without prophetic guidance.² This application of the strongly individualistic language of the original to the Person and office of Jesus is so obvious that St. Peter (or the reporter of his words) does not think it worth while to draw out the comparison. He passes on, emphasizing the continual witness of prophecy throughout the whole history of Israel to the truth of this great ideal. *Yea and all the prophets from Samuel and them that followed after, as many as have spoken, they also told of these days.*³ He selects one more instance,—God's covenant with Abraham, that *In his seed all the families of the earth should be blessed.*⁴ Like St. Paul,⁵ St. Peter sees the fulfilment of this Covenant in Christ. *Unto you first* (and therefore by implication, afterward to all the families of the earth) *God having raised up his servant Jesus sent him to bless you in turning away everyone of you from your iniquities.*⁶ "In Christ the Jewish race was summed up, in Him it fulfilled its purpose and became a blessing to the whole earth."⁷

The Apostle was proceeding to impress upon his listeners the necessity of taking full advantage of their splendid inheritance—*ye are the sons of the*

¹ Acts iii. 21. Cf. the almost exact reproduction of the phrase in the song of Zacharias, Luke i. 70. ² Acts iii. 22-23; Deut. xviii. 15.

³ *Ibid.* 24.

⁴ *Ibid.* 25; Gen. xii. 3, xxii. 18.

⁵ Gal. iii. 16.

⁶ *Ibid.* 26.

⁷ Lightfoot, *Gal.* p. 143.

prophets and of the covenant—when his appeal was cut short in consequence of his arrest by order of the Sadducean and priestly parties. Summoned next day into the presence of the Council, St. Peter and St. John boldly confessed their faith, the former warning his judges that *Christ is the stone which was set at nought of you the builders, which was made the head of the corner*.¹ Once more St. Peter uses the language of a psalm which had been already utilized for the same purpose by the Master. The fulfilment of the words in Christ is too obvious to need any comment.

The two Apostles were dismissed with a warning. They returned to their fellows, and straightway fell to prayer. Once more the language of the Psalter occurred to them as strikingly appropriate.

*Why did the Gentiles rage
And the peoples imagine vain things?
The kings of the earth set themselves in array,
And the rulers were gathered together
Against the Lord and against his anointed (κατὰ τοῦ
Χριστοῦ αὐτοῦ).*²

No psalm has, with more justice, been regarded as directly Messianic. In no passage of Scripture do we find a finer presentment of the magnificent scorn with which Jehovah meets all the futile efforts of the nations and their earth-kings³ to overthrow His holy purpose. Nowhere does prophecy represent with more dignity and grandeur the association of the divinely appointed king in Jehovah's ultimate triumph. It can be no wonder, then, that the

¹ Acts iv. 11, Ps. cxviii. 22. ² Acts iv. 25, 26, Ps. ii. 1, 2.

³ מְלִכֵּי אֲרָץ opposed to מְלִכֵּי.

Apostles turned for comfort to this psalm when confronted by the determined hostility of the upper classes. The actual designation of the king by the title *Messiah*, the Anointed, brought home still more forcibly to the Apostles the applicability of these verses to God's holy servant Jesus, *the Christ*, whom God anointed¹ with the Holy Ghost and with power.² Here St. Peter who, we may presume, took the lead in this united act of prayer (ὁμοθυμαδὸν 24), sees a special fulfilment in the distinct mention of *Gentiles* (nations) and *peoples*—the former of which he applies to the Romans, the latter to the Jews, whose unhallowed alliance was symbolized by the reconciliation of Pilate and Herod. *For of a truth in this city against Jesus . . . both Herod and Pontius Pilate with the Gentiles and the peoples of Israel, were gathered together.* We can hardly suppose, however, that the Apostles imagined that the significance of the prophecy was exhausted by this coincidence. Lastly, we should notice the striking words in which St. Peter appeals to the fulfilment of prophecy in his discourse before Cornelius and the Gentile converts. *To him* (as the ordained judge of quick and dead) *bear all the prophets witness that through his name every one that believeth on him shall receive remission of sins.*³ Once more he definitely connects the great doctrines of the forgiveness of sins with the Messianic predictions of the coming Saviour, whom he identifies with the risen Jesus.

Such, then, is the argument from prophecy as seen

¹ Acts iv. 27.

² Acts x. 38 (St. Peter's speech to Cornelius).

³ Acts x. 42, 43, cf. esp. Luke xxiv. 47.

in St. Peter's speeches, recorded in the Acts. What conclusions are we entitled to draw from the character of his quotations?

(1) We cannot fail to be struck by their manifest genuineness. They are precisely such as would be most natural in St. Peter's mouth at this time. They are always suited to the occasion. They contain no definite allusion to the question of the admission of the Gentiles which came so prominently before the Church at a slightly later period. Had the speeches been later fabrications invented by the historian it is hardly conceivable that no prophetic reference to the catholicity of the Church should have been put into St. Peter's mouth, especially as both prophets and psalms were laid under contribution by such diverse Apostles as St. James and St. Paul in support of their universalistic policy. The passages of the Old Testament, however, to which St. Peter appeals in these early discourses are cited in witness of the truth of the fundamental assertion of Christianity—the Messiahship of Jesus. Nor can we be surprised at the frequency with which they appear. It was essential to show the Jews, to whose conversion all the first missionary efforts were directed, that this Jesus whom they crucified, whom God raised up, fulfilled all the conditions of the Messianic picture, prefigured alike in prophecy and in the Psalter.

(2) The citations cannot be called circumstantial predictions, though brought forward by St. Peter in support of definite historical events. They fall rather under the category of experiences, or illustrations of principles, which never were, and

never could be, adequately realized under the old Dispensation, but which found in Christ their completest, because most spiritual, fulfilment.

(3) We next observe the very wide range from which these quotations are drawn. They begin with "Moses." The Abrahamic covenant, the Deuteronomic promise, the faithful oath unto David, are all appealed to. The prophets bear witness to the outpouring of the Spirit, and the all-embracing character of the Divine promise. Indeed, their testimony is far wider, though we have no other formal citations from their writings. The sufferings of Christ, His mission and character, (*παῖς θεοῦ, δίκαιος*), the blotting out of sins, the seasons of refreshing, the exaltation and second coming of Christ, all these found a place in that prophetic preparation of mankind for Christ which had been in progress ever since the world began. The psalms, in particular, are treated as the most important section of prophetic literature. The fate of the traitor Judas, the unholy and useless conspiracy of Jew and Gentile against the holy Jesus, His rejection by the hierarchy, His trust in the presence of God, His death and burial, His glorious resurrection and ascension, and present majesty, these were all prefigured in the inspired anticipations of the Psalter. Especially noteworthy is the catholicity of this appeal to Scripture. "Moses," Samuel, *they that followed after*, the most varied psalms, Joel, Isaiah, do not exhaust the range of his selection. He claims, rather, the fulfilment of *the things which God foreshowed by the mouth of ALL the prophets*.

(4) This leads us to our final observation. We

know something of the Lord's post-resurrection teaching concerning the kingdom of God. It dealt largely with the fulfilment of prophecy in His own person and history. We know how He too *began from Moses and all the prophets*; we know how He too appealed to *all* that the prophets had spoken, and how He specially included the psalms as finding their accomplishment in Himself—*all things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms, concerning me*.¹ We know, moreover, the main lines along which He taught His followers to look for the fulfilment of prophecy. His sufferings, His resurrection, His entering into glory, the preaching of repentance and remission in His name. We remember, too, how He charged the Apostles to witness to these things, and to wait for the promised Spirit which He would send upon them. Now the descent of the Spirit marked the opening of St. Peter's ministry, and he is at once ready with a prophetic explanation of this great event. Again, his insistence on the Apostolic function of *bearing witness to these things* shows how deeply impressed he had been by the teaching of the risen Lord. His quotation of two psalms which the Lord had employed before His passion in a very similar connexion show that he had a retentive memory for the words and arguments which he had heard his Master employ. Is it going too far to suppose that in his remaining quotations we may in all probability discern some of those things that the Saviour spoke after His resurrection concerning the kingdom of God. At

¹ Lk. xxiv. 44.

any rate the parallel between St. Peter's recorded references and what we know of Our Lord's teaching during the great forty days is curiously complete. Both *begin with Moses*, both appeal to the psalms, in both we note the same catholicity in the claim that *all* prophecy had been fulfilled in Christ. Again, we notice in both the identical nature of the facts in attestation of which the passages are claimed—that *Christ should suffer*, the resurrection in glory, the remission of sins. To the present writer the conclusion seems irresistible that the references to prophetic literature in these early discourses of St. Peter furnish us with a most precious clue as to the character of those mysterious conversations which the risen Lord held with His disciples.

We pass now from St. Peter to St. Stephen. The latter's speech has really a twofold object, corresponding to the twofold charge preferred against him. His accusers professed to have *heard him say that this Jesus of Nazareth shall destroy this place* (the temple) *and shall change the customs which Moses delivered unto us.*¹ St. Stephen replies to the first charge by showing that the Old Testament itself teaches that true religion is independent of the temple or even sacrifice. In this connexion he twice quotes prophecy.

The difficult passage from Amos is first cited :

*Did ye offer unto me slain beasts and sacrifices
Forty years in the wilderness, O house of Israel?
And ye took up the tabernacle of Moloch and the star of the
god Rephan,*

¹ Acts vi. 14.

*The figures which ye made to worship them ;
And I will carry you away beyond Babylon.¹*

We need not stay to discuss the interesting literary problems raised by this obscure passage. It will be sufficient to point out its bearing on the main drift of St. Stephen's apology.

(1) True religion did not consist in burnt offerings and sacrifices. These could easily be dispensed with, as indeed they were, during the wanderings in the wilderness. The lesson here enforced by Amos was taken up and emphasized by Jeremiah. *I spake not with your fathers nor commanded them in the day that I brought them out of the land of Egypt concerning burnt offerings and sacrifices, but this thing I commanded them, saying, Hear my voice.²*

(2) The people, however, were totally unable to rise to such a spiritual idea of Jehovah's claims. They resorted to idolatrous practices in which they could find ample opportunity to give their materialistic conceptions of the Divine character and requirements full scope.

(3) An inevitable punishment is incurred by such obstinate blindness to God's self-revelation.

The passage therefore brings out very clearly the spiritual character of Israel's religion, and the inability or, rather, refusal of the people to appreciate such high truths, and is thus admirably adapted to St. Stephen's line of defence. He substantiates his argument by yet another quotation well calculated to dissipate any limitations which the erection of the Temple might seem to have imposed upon God's universal presence and infinite power.

¹ Acts vii. 42, 43 ; Amos v. 25.

² Jer. vii. 21.

The Most High dwelleth not in temples made with hands ; as saith the prophet,

*Heaven is my throne, and earth the footstool of my feet :
What manner of house will ye build me ? saith the Lord :
Or what is the place of my rest ?
Did not my hand make all these things ?*¹

No passage in the Old Testament contains so full a vindication of the spirituality of the worship acceptable to Jehovah, or could be more appositely quoted in defending the claim of Christianity to welcome in every place those who would *worship the Father in spirit and in truth*.

With regard to the second accusation of *changing the customs which Moses had delivered*, St. Stephen very skilfully employs the history of Moses to show that so far from *his* making any revolutionary alteration in his doctrines, it was *they* who, in rejecting Jesus, were merely repeating the treatment they had accorded to their great lawgiver. Although St. Stephen never mentions the name that lay nearest his heart,² the drift of his argument must have been plain to all his listeners. *This Moses whom they refused, him hath God sent to be both a ruler and deliverer. This man led them forth, having wrought wonders and signs in Egypt. This is that Moses which said to the children, A prophet shall God raise up unto you from among your brethren, like unto me. This is he that was in the church in the wilderness, who received living oracles to give unto us, to whom our fathers would not be obedient, but thrust him from them.*³ Even without the pointed reference to the

¹ Acts vii. 48-50, Is. lxvi. 1, 2.

² Acts vii. 59.

³ Acts vii. 35-38.

promise in Deut. xviii. 15, attention is concentrated upon the Messianic aspect of Moses' life and work. The accomplishment of the Egyptian deliverance through his means, the misunderstanding of his mission by his own brethren, the rejection by his own people of the Divine message with which he was entrusted—all these incidents in his career could not fail to suggest the remarkable parallel presented by the life and death of Jesus, whom St. Stephen hailed as Messiah. But the introduction of the Deuteronomic prophecy makes the speaker's intention still clearer. Whether before the conclusion of his apology—so abruptly terminated—St. Stephen intended to draw out this comparison, or whether he would have preferred to have left the obvious parallel without further comment in its unmistakeable suggestiveness, we cannot tell. All we can say for certain is that St. Stephen saw in the Old Testament a real preparation for Christianity. By studying its words, men would be led to expect the appearance of a great prophet *like unto Moses*, they would be warned beforehand of the fate that awaited him at the hand of his own compatriots, they would find the most striking testimonies to the spiritual character of true religion: and all these anticipations and prefigurements were completely and finally fulfilled in Jesus Christ, and the doctrines He came to preach.

The next instance of the use of prophecy is to be found in the account of Philip the Evangelist's conversation with the Ethiopian eunuch. The latter was returning from a pilgrimage at Jerusalem, and

Philip could overhear him reading to himself the wonderful chapter which described the tragic end of Jehovah's servant. Prompted by an irresistible impulse which he ascribed to Divine agency, Philip approached and asked if he understood what he was reading. The eunuch replied that it was impossible without a guide. Was it of himself or of another that the prophet was speaking? *And Philip beginning from this scripture preached to him the good tidings of Jesus.*¹

The wonderful restraint of the expression here used is most noteworthy. The eunuch's original question is left unanswered. Such questions, however interesting, could not affect the real significance of the prophecy. St. Philip seizes upon the cardinal truths conveyed in this passage, and finds in them an admirable starting point² for expounding the Gospel message. The phrase *to preach Jesus*, as the sequel shows, must mean far more than to "describe the life of Jesus and point out its correspondence with the account of Messiah given by Isaiah."³ It denotes, indeed, that Philip explained the fulfilment of the prophecies of the servant in Jesus Christ, but also that he pointed out the abrogation of all race privileges, and the throwing open of the covenant blessings to all believers, in the Catholic Church.

We have noticed the universalistic tendency of many of the prophecies here quoted. It was, however, reserved for St. James to justify the inclusion of the Gentiles in the Christian communion by a

¹ Acts viii. 26-40, Is. liii. 7, 8.

² ἀρξάμενος ἀπὸ τῆς γραφῆς ταύτης. ³ Page, *Acts*, 135.

direct reference to the teaching of the prophets. At the Council of Jerusalem he thus addresses the assembled elders of the Church. *Symeon hath rehearsed how first God did visit the Gentiles, to take out of them a people for his name. And to this agree the words of the prophets; as it is written,*

*I will build again the tabernacle of David which is fallen,
And I will build again the ruins thereof . . .*

*That the residue of men may seek after the Lord
And all the Gentiles upon whom my name is called,*

*Saith the Lord, who maketh these things known
from the beginning of the world.*¹

Several points in this citation require elucidation.

(1) The conclusion is different both to Heb. and LXX. The former ends **וְאַתָּה יְהוָה עֹשֶׂה זֶה**; the latter, λέγει Κύριος ὁ ποιῶν ταῦτα πάντα. The previous verse, however, ends with the words **בִּימֵי עִדְיָם** (as the days of old)—καθὼς αἱ ἡμέραι ἀπ' αἰῶνος. These words St. James omits in their proper context, but the γνωστὰ ἀπ' αἰῶνος with which his citation concludes may possibly be accounted for as an attempt to supply the omission. ὥς τὰ, or ὥστε, ἀπ' αἰῶνος yielding no adequate sense, was then expanded into the form in which it now occurs both in the best MSS. and the received text.

On the other hand, the words may not be intended as a quotation at all, but merely as a parenthetical comment by St. James himself on the Divine foreknowledge of, and preparation for, the universal character of the gospel message.

(2) That part of the prophecy which "agrees"

¹ Acts xv. 14-18, Amos ix. 11, 12.

most with the admission of the Gentiles to the full privileges of Christian fellowship, bears but the slightest resemblance to the original Hebrew. The prophet speaks of the restored Jews as *possessing the remnant of Edom and all nations called by my name* (לְמִעַן וַיְרֶשֶׁי אֶת-שְׂאִרֵי אֶדּוֹם). The LXX with a different text before them, or more likely through a misunderstanding of the Hebrew, translated ὅπως ἐκζητήσωσιν οἱ κατάλοιποι τῶν ἀνθρώπων (+ τὸν Κύριον only in A) i.e. 'אֶת־יְיָ or יְרֶשֶׁי אֶת־יְיָ. שְׂאִרֵי אֶדּוֹם.

The LXX translators shared the larger hopes of their day, and on more than one occasion they allowed their sympathy with such aspirations to affect their renderings. It is, however, surprising that the Hebraic president of the Church of Jerusalem should have quoted from the Greek version in favour of Hellenistic converts: it is even more surprising that the accuracy of his quotation was not called in question by the party opposed to the extension of Jewish privileges. But the original prophecy is not destitute of the significance which St. James here attaches to it. *All the nations* are brought within the theocratic kingdom, albeit by martial conquest or political subjugation. The *manner* of their inbringing is brought by the LXX more into harmony with the humaner ideals of a more tolerant age (and their modification in this direction would naturally be more acceptable to St. James as an illustration of the universal diffusion of Christianity than the severely uncompromising language of the original writer); but the *fact* of their

inclusion in the restored theocracy is an idea present to the mind of the Hebrew prophet; and thus the passage is not inappropriately regarded as foreshowing the share of the Gentiles in the Messianic salvation.

(3) We ought also to notice that the prophecy was originally addressed to the Jewish nation, and that, strictly speaking, to the Jews alone it is properly applicable. But as Alford rightly points out, "it is obvious on any deep view of prophetic interpretation that the glorious things which shall have"—we would prefer to say 'may have'—"a fulfilment in the literal Israel, must have *their complete and most worthy fulfilment* in the spiritual theocracy of which the Son of David is the head."¹

Let us now pass on to consider the quotations to be found in the speeches of St. Paul. His address in the synagogue of Pisidian Antioch is punctuated by frequent appeals to prophecy. Thus he reminds his hearers of God's election of David,² and of the Divine *promise* that from his seed a Saviour would be raised.³ In a striking passage he shows how the blindness of the rulers to the prophetic warnings resulted in the accomplishment by them of the prophets' predictions. *For they that dwell in their Jerusalem and their rulers, because they knew him not, nor the voices of the prophets that are read every sabbath day, fulfilled them by condemning*

¹ Alford, *in loc.* vol. ii. p. 166.

² Acts xiii. 22.

³ It is at least worthy of remark that instead of proving this point by offering any evidence of the Lord's physical descent from David, he only testifies to the awe with which John Baptist regarded the character of his successor.

*him.*¹ But the resurrection was God's reversal of the wicked act of the Jewish nation. It proved also the Divine Sonship of Jesus—and as such received an apt illustration from the language of the second psalm (ὥς καὶ γέγραπται οὐκ ἵνα πληρώθῃ κ.τ.λ.)—*My son art thou, I this day have begotten thee.*² The psalm, already quoted by St. Peter in a Messianic sense, describes in a dramatically vivid form Jehovah's decisive interposition on behalf of His anointed king. On some occasion of supreme importance, when all the forces of the nations threatened to overwhelm the theocratic prince, God, by a crowning manifestation of His sovereign power, had shattered the world-powers, and by Divine decree adopted Messiah as His Son. Twice before, the voice from heaven—at the baptism and at the transfiguration—had declared, in language intended to recall the magnificent anticipations of this psalm that Jesus was the Son of God. The application of the words to the resurrection is obvious. St. Paul of course does not mean to imply that our Lord was then *adopted* as the Son of God, but that by the resurrection His Sonship was visibly attested, in answer to Jewish blasphemy and Gentile scepticism. It is specially interesting to note the development of this view by the same Apostle on another occasion, when speaking of *the gospel of God which he promised afore by his prophets in the holy scriptures, concerning his son*, he describes Jesus Christ as *born of the seed of David according to the flesh, but declared to be the Son of God with power by the resurrection from the dead.*³

¹ Acts xiii. 27.² *Ibid.* 33.³ Rom. i. 2-4.

St. Paul then proceeds to refer to *the holy and sure promises of David* (i.e. blessings promised to David). These of course refer to the inauguration of the Messianic salvation by David's promised son. They were holy not only because they emanated from God, but because they concerned the fate of Him who was pre-eminently *the Holy One of God*. They were sure, because it was only in the resurrection of Christ that the blessings were assured, and the promise received its final ratification.

*And as concerning that he raised him up from the dead, now no more to return to corruption, he hath spoken on this wise, I will give you the holy and sure blessings of David. Because, he saith also in another psalm, Thou wilt not give thy holy one to see corruption.*¹ Following the same line of argument as that with which we are already familiar in the mouth of St. Peter, he shows the inapplicability of these words to David, and their ultimate realization in the experiences of the historical Christ.

The sermon closes with a solemn warning: *Beware, therefore, lest that come upon you which is written in the prophets;*

Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish;

For I work a work in your days,

*A work which ye shall in no wise believe though one declare it unto you.*²

St. Paul here applies the prophecy describing the impending overthrow of Israel and other peoples by *the bitter nation, the Chaldeans*. It is all the more curious to find the Apostle here citing from

¹ Acts x. 30-37, Is. lv. 3, Ps. xvi. 10.

² Acts xiii. 40, 41, Hab. i. 5.

the Alexandrian version (οἱ καταφρονῆται) as the Hebrew would have seemed more suggestive in his present circumstances, *Behold ye among the nations* (ראה בגויות). The audience would, however, doubtless have been largely composed of Hellenistic Jews, and to them the LXX would have been more familiar than the original.

No reference can here be intended to God's mysterious work in the Incarnation of Jesus Christ: the allusion is rather to the inevitable punishment which would overtake their unbelief if the Jews blindly persisted in such a course; and the fulfilment must be sought either in the destruction of Jerusalem or in the rejection of Israel, and the election of the Gentiles to fill their place.

However that may be, the Jews were filled with unreasoning envy when they saw the intense interest excited by St. Paul's words among the Gentile inhabitants of the city. They publicly contradicted the statements of St. Paul, and blasphemously repudiated the Messianic claims of Christ. In the face of such opposition St. Paul and St. Barnabas took the momentous step, fraught with such tremendous possibilities, of *turning to the Gentiles*. And in so doing, they felt themselves justified by the direct command of God. *For so hath the Lord commanded us, saying*

I have set thee for a light of the Gentiles

*That thou shouldest be for salvation unto the uttermost parts
of the earth* (ἕως ἑσχάτου τῆς γῆς).¹

The same expression had been used by the Lord Himself in defining the extent of the *witness* of His

¹ Acts xiii. 44-47; Is. xlix. 6.

Church to His character and claims;¹ and now the Apostles saw in the prophetic anticipation of the world-wide scope of the Servant's activity a pledge of the universality of their own preaching, and thus encouraged by the prophet's ideals, proceeded to turn those ideals of Jewish prophecy into the facts of Christian history.

In his farewell speech to the Ephesian elders, St. Paul introduces a significant allusion to the Psalmist's prayer to Jehovah to *remember thy congregation which thou hast purchased of old, which thou hast redeemed.*² The words describing God's elective redemption of Israel, find a truer and completer application to Christ's love for the Church. The assembled *bishops* are reminded of their solemn responsibility to *shepherd the church of God which he purchased with his own blood.*³

The Apostle's defence before Agrippa contains more than one reference to the prophetic preparation for Jesus Christ. St. Paul declares that he stands to be judged *for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers.* He assures the king that by proclaiming the resurrection of Jesus he is *saying nothing but what the prophets and Moses did say should come; how that the Christ must suffer* (εἰ παθητὸς ὁ Χριστός) *and how that he first by the resurrection of the dead should proclaim light both to the people* (τῷ λαῷ = the Jewish nation) *and to the Gentiles.* He can appeal to Agrippa to corroborate the accuracy of his own interpretation of the prophetic language. *King Agrippa believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest.*⁴ St. Paul's

¹ Acts i. 8. ² Ps. lxxiv. 2. ³ Acts xx. 28. ⁴ Acts xxvi. 7, 22-23, 27.

reference to *the promises made of God to our fathers* is very characteristic and may be compared with his use of prophecy recorded in his speech at Pisidian Antioch. In both places he claims the witness of the prophets to the sufferings and resurrection of Christ, and to the blessings flowing from them not only to the Jews but also to the Gentiles.

The history of the Acts ends with a most significant quotation and reference—St. Paul is now in Rome. After three days he called together those that were the chief of the Jews. To them *he expounded the matter, testifying the kingdom of God, and persuading them concerning Jesus both from the law of Moses and the prophets.*¹ His efforts met with a partial success, but again he was confronted with that obstinate unbelief which his constant experience had taught him to expect from many of his compatriots. He does not let them depart without solemnly warning them of the consequences of their persistence in such a course. He quotes in full the terrible words in which Isaiah was commissioned to preach to the impenitent people of his day, words in which the Lord had already seen a tragic illustration of the refusal of *his own* countrymen to accept His mission—*Well spake the Holy Ghost through Isaiah the prophet unto your fathers, saying,*

Go thou unto this people, and say,

Hearing ye shall hear, and in no wise understand (etc. to the end of the passage).

Be it therefore known unto you, that this salvation

¹ Acts xxvlii. 23.

*of God is sent unto the Gentiles. They also will hear.*¹

These are the last words of the Apostle of the Gentiles recorded in the Acts. He once more substantiates from the prophets and psalms his belief in the rejection of Israel and the calling of the Gentiles. The words are spoken in sorrow, but perhaps also in hope. For we can here discern the germs of the argument which he had developed with such force and pathos in his epistle to the Roman Church—that God had not finally cast off His ancient people, but that while their unbelief had been the means of the inbringing of the Gentiles, the sight of the latter actively participating in the blessings of the Messianic kingdom would rouse them to a godly jealousy, and thus *all Israel would be saved.*²

We can learn much from these quotations in the Acts of the Apostles. They furnish us with an invaluable clue to the importance attached by the first Christian disciples to the argument from prophecy as establishing the claims of Jesus Christ. Let us briefly summarize their main characteristics.

1. We should observe the internal evidence of these passages to their own genuineness. They are just such as the particular speakers would use on the occasions on which they are attributed to them. Thus while St. Peter cites prophecy mainly in support of the Messiahship of Jesus, St. Stephen claims the prophets as witnesses to the spiritual character of true religion, and St. Paul sees in

¹ Acts. xxviii. 25-28, Is. vi. 9-10, Ps. lxvii. 2, xcvi. 3.

² Rom. ix. 11.

their utterances a definite anticipation of the rejection of the Jews and the inclusion of the Gentiles in the theocratic kingdom.

2. Secondly, we notice the wide range of the appeal. The psalms are quoted even more frequently than the prophets; and the promises made by God to the fathers are shown to have had their beginning in *Moses*. Again, it is not to any individual prophet or to any single prediction that appeal is made—but to the whole of the Old Testament, viewed in a prophetic light, as preparing the way for Christianity: Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, *all* the prophets since the world began, *all* that is written in the law of Moses, *all* the glowing ideals of the Psalter—*all* things have been accomplished in Christ. Such was the magnificent comprehensiveness of the view taken by the Apostles of the fulfilment of prophecy.

3. Lastly, we should notice the nature of the doctrine in favour of which these passages of Scripture are adduced. Generally speaking, the Old Testament bore special evidence to two main lines of thought.

- (a) The consummation of the kingdom of God.
- (b) The life and character of the king through whom Jehovah's rule would be perfectly mediated.

It is to the confirmation of one or other of these two great prophetic hopes that all the quotations in the Acts may legitimately be referred.

With regard to the kingdom, prophecy attests

- (1) The establishment of the original covenant relation.

- (2) The function of the Church to *witness* to the Lord.
- (3) Her spiritual religion.
- (4) Her redemption by God.
- (5) Her all-embracing universality.
- (6) Her great gift of the remission of sins.
- (7) The outpouring of the Spirit on the Apostles at Pentecost.
- (8) The promise of the same endowment to all who should call on Messiah's name.

With regard to the Messiah Himself, whom the Apostles identified with Jesus of Nazareth, the whole Old Testament constitutes one great prophecy. The following are, however, some of the more definite predictions which have been manifestly fulfilled in Him.

(a) His origin.

(9) The Davidic Sonship.

(10) The Divine Sonship.

(b) His character.

(11) The promised Prophet.

(12) The suffering Servant.

(13) The triumphant King.

(c) His life.

(14) His base betrayal.

(15) His rejection by the Jews.

(16) Especially by the chief priests.

(17) And their unhallowed alliance with the Gentiles.

(18) His sufferings.

(19) His death.

(20) His resurrection.

(21) His exaltation.

- (22) His universal dominion.
- (23) The power of His name.
- (24) The awful consequences to the Jews of repudiating His claims.
- (25) The blissful result to the Gentiles of accepting Him as Saviour.

The portrait is marvellously complete; and we cannot be surprised if the early believers found in the argument from prophecy one of the greatest supports to their faith. The risen Master had claimed to fulfil completely in Himself *all that was written in the prophets, and the law of Moses, and the psalms*. The Apostles saw that this was indeed the case, and would never weary of finding fresh instances of the truth of the Saviour's words. While occasionally dissenting from the methods employed (as somewhat unsuitable to a more scientific and critical age) we nevertheless find ourselves in the most whole-hearted agreement with the conclusion they reach, namely, the immense evidential value of Old Testament prophecy.

§ II. THE USE OF PROPHECY IN THE PAULINE EPISTLES.

It is a curious fact well worthy of notice that, with one single exception, there are no actual quotations from the prophets¹ outside the first four Epistles written under the stress of the Jewish controversy. This is not really surprising, for the object of the Epistles was not the conversion of

¹ There are, however, several direct and indirect allusions to the language and teaching of the prophets.

unbelieving Jews, but the edification of Gentile Churches, whose members could not be expected to appreciate the force of such allusions to the Jewish Scriptures.

The exception referred to occurs in Eph. iv. 5, where the precept, *Putting away falsehood, speak ye every man the truth with his neighbour*, is derived from Zech. viii. 8. This is followed by a quotation from the Psalter, *Be ye angry and sin not*,¹ which serves, as it were, the purpose of a text to what St. Paul wishes to lay down with regard to the place of anger in a Christian's life. There are, however, some references to Old Testament prophecy in the Epistles to the Thessalonians, which call for consideration as they have an important bearing on the Christology of St. Paul.

Thus Jesus Christ, in a strongly apocalyptic passage, is called ὁ ῥύόμενος. The Thessalonians are warned ἀναμένειν τὸν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν Ἰησοῦν, τὸν ῥύόμενον ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης.

There is, of course, an allusion to the meaning of the name "Jesus," but there seems to be a further reference to Is. lix. 20, *and a redeemer shall come to Zion* (quoted with variations in Rom. xi. 26), where LXX translates יְשׁוּעָה by ὁ ῥύόμενος. The expression is also frequently used throughout the whole of the second section of Isaiah, to describe Jehovah's relation to his people—ὁ ῥυσάμενος.

It is, however, in the Second Epistle that such references are most numerous and striking. Speaking of *the apocalypse of the Lord Jesus from Heaven with the angels of his might*, St. Paul

¹ Ps. iv. 5.

mentions the *flame of fire* constantly mentioned by the prophets as an indication of the presence of God. He tells how He will *render vengeance to them that know not God and that obey not the gospel* (cf. Jer. x. 25 = Ps. lxxix. 6)—*even eternal destruction*, ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου τοῦ κυρίου καὶ ἀπὸ τῆς δόξης τῆς ἰσχύος αὐτοῦ (words used by Isaiah to describe the awful *day of Jehovah of hosts*, ii. 10, 19, 21) ὅταν ἔλθῃ ἐνδοξασθῆναι ἐν τοῖς ἀγίοις αὐτοῦ καὶ θαυμασθῆναι . . . (here the Psalter contributes the description of the glorious majesty of Jehovah's advent. Cf. esp. Ps. lxxxix. 5, 8):

ἐξομοληγῇσονται οἱ οὐρανοὶ τὰ θαυμάσιά σου, Κύριε . . .
ὁ θεὸς ἐνδοξαζόμενος ἐν βουλῇ ἁγίων).¹

The passage ends with the words *in that day*—that day, to which the prophets looked forward as inaugurating Jehovah's victorious advent, and which St. Paul identified with *the second coming of Christ*. The boldness of this identification is still further emphasized by the prayer with which the Apostle concludes this section—ὅπως ἐνδοξάσθῃ τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ ἐν ὑμῖν.² Here, once more, the language of Isaiah is adopted by St. Paul, who by the addition of the words ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ applies what was originally said of Jehovah to the Christians' Lord, Jesus Christ.

In the next chapter we have a somewhat different instance. Alluding to *the son of perdition* that exalteth himself *above every god* (Daniel xi. 36) *and above every object of reverence, so as to sit in the temple of God* (cf. Ezek. xxviii. 2), he speaks of

cf. ¹ Ps. lxviii. 35, 36.

² 2 Thess. i. 12, Is. lxvi. 5.

him as *the lawless one, whom the Lord Jesus will destroy with the breath of his mouth*. Here the Lord Jesus is identified with the Messianic Prince foretold by Isaiah.¹

The passages above cited are noticeable for "the fearlessness with which the Apostle applies the phenomena represented in the Old Testament as the symbols of the Divine presence, the attendant angels (Ps. lxxviii. 17) and the flame of fire (Ex. iii. 2, xix. 18, Deut. iv. 11, Ps. civ. 4, Is. lxvi. 15, Mal. iv. 1, also Dan. vii. 9, 10, where both images are found combined) to the appearing of our Lord. In some cases the very expressions used in the Hebrew prophets of God have been adopted by St. Paul in speaking of Christ."²

Perhaps the most remarkable instance of this adaptation is to be found in Phil. ii. 10, where the glowing language in which St. Paul describes the triumphant exaltation of Christ is modelled on the magnificent prophecy in Is. xlv. 23, words which, as we have seen, represent to an unusual degree the sublime monotheism and universalism of Israel's greatest religious teachers. As the reward for the voluntary humiliation of Jesus, *God highly exalted him and gave unto him the name which is above every name, that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow . . . and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father*. "It seems clear from the context that *the name of Jesus* is not only the medium but the object of universal adoration."³ Here, then, we have

¹ 2 Thess. ii. 8, Is. xi. 4. ² Lightfoot, *Notes on Epp. of St. Paul*, p. 102.

³ Lightfoot, *Ep. Phil.* 114.

ascribed to Jesus all those Divine prerogatives which it would be blasphemous to ascribe to any but God, and which the Old Testament had in the most emphatic manner claimed for Jehovah Himself. It is obvious, if this line of interpretation were once accepted, how exalted an estimate the Apostles were enabled to derive from the prophets, of the nature, the character, the claims, the triumph of Jesus Christ.

We may now, without going into unnecessary detail, consider the remaining citations of prophecy to be found in the writings of St. Paul. These may, broadly speaking, be classed under three heads.

(1) He cites prophecy in illustration of the principles he is trying to enforce. In these cases both the language and the idea are identical with that of the original. A few instances will be sufficient. In the Epistles to the Romans and to the Galatians he is led to speak much on the impossibility of justification by the law and the vital importance of faith. In both Epistles, accordingly, he cites and expounds the crucial text in the law of Moses concerning Abraham's faith. *Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*¹ In both Epistles he quotes the testimony of the Psalmist that in God's sight *no flesh shall be justified.*² In both Epistles he dwells on the significance of the prophet's statement that *the just shall live by faith.*³

The universal prevalence of sin is illustrated by a whole series of passages from the psalms and the

¹ Gen. xv. 6; Gal. iii. 6; Rom. iv. 3, 9, 22.

² Ps. cxliii. 2; Gal. ii. 16; Rom. iii. 20.

³ Hab. ii. 4; Gal. iii. 11; Rom. i. 17.

prophets.¹ His teaching on the blessedness of the forgiveness of sins finds its counterpart in "David."

Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered.

Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord reckoneth not.²

The marvellous depth of the wisdom of God had already been felt by the prophet,

Who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor?

Or who hath first given unto him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again?³

Or, again, touching the folly of human wisdom compared with the high designs of God, was it not also written—

*I will destroy the wisdom of the wise,
And the prudence of the prudent will I reject.*

Where is the wise? where the scribe? . . . God hath made foolish the wisdom of the world.⁴ Or, once more, he cites *the promises* which have found their fulfilment in the Christian covenant, and appeals to the Corinthians, as the inheritors of these promises, to *cleanse themselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.⁵* For we are a temple of the living God; even as God said,

*I will dwell in them, and walk in them;
And I will be their God, and they shall be my people.
Wherefore come ye out from among them,
And be ye separate, saith the Lord,
And I will receive you.*

¹ Rom. iii. 10-18; Ps. xiv. 1, v. 9, cxl. 3, x. 7; Is. lix. 7, 8.

² Rom. iv. 7; Ps. xxxii. 1, 2. ³ Rom. xi. 34, 35; Is. xl. 13.

⁴ 1 Cor. i. 19, 20; Is. xxix. 14, xix. 11, xxxiii. 18.

⁵ 2 Cor. vii. 1.

*And I will be to you a Father,
And ye shall be to me sons and daughters,
Saith the Lord Almighty.¹*

(2) The next class of quotations are singularly different. In these St. Paul merely adopts prophetic language as a suitable vehicle for the expression of his own thought. On such occasions he employs the words of the prophet with an entire disregard for their original significance; and, moreover, he does not hesitate to introduce such alterations into the language of the citation as will bring it more fully into conformity with his own ideas.

Perhaps the most striking instance of his disregard for the original context is to be found in his citation of Hosea xiii. 14 as a cry of triumph over the final abolition of death. After quoting in the same connection the words of Is. xxv. 8, he breaks out into the triumphant cry, *O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting?* As the words occur in Hosea, their meaning can only be that God summons all the plagues of death and hell to overwhelm His unrepentant people. St. Paul exactly reverses their significance.²

Another instance is his adaptation of Ps. lxxviii. 19 to the ascension of Christ, and the gifts that He bestows on His Church.³ *Wherefore he saith*

*When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive
And gave gifts unto men.*

Now the whole point of the original lies in the idea of the triumphant king *receiving* gifts from men

¹ 2 Cor. vi. 16-18; Ez. xxxvii. 27; Is. lii. 11; 2 Sam. vii. 8; Hos. i. 10; Is. xliii. 6.

² 1 Cor. xv. 55.

³ Eph. iv. 8.

The substitution of ἔδωκεν for ἡρᾶ (ἐλαβες, LXX) cannot be defended on any grounds of idiomatic translation. St. Paul boldly alters the entire sense of the passage in order to make the language more appropriate to his argument.

There are not a few similar cases to be found in St. Paul's Epistles. They are perhaps hardly to be considered formal quotations. "An expression of Scripture occurs to him as being the *mot de la situation*." Whatever its original significance, its application (*mutatis mutandis*) to the history of Christ or to the circumstances of the Church strikes him as a valuable illustration of his own argument, "but he does not identify either the facts or the persons."¹ Such citations are interesting as throwing light on the Apostle's manner of quoting the Scriptures, but as they have no bearing on the evidential value of prophecy, they need not detain us any longer.²

(3) The quotations belonging to this last division are of a Messianic character, and deal partly with prophecies fulfilled in our Lord, and partly with the Old Testament anticipations of the calling of the Gentiles.

Of the former, we should notice the Apostle's directly Messianic interpretation of the Divine covenant with Abraham. *To Abraham were the promises made, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as*

¹ T. K. Abbot, *I.C.C. Ephesians*, 112.

² For other instances cf. Rom. ii. 24, 1 Cor. ii. 9, Eph. vi. 13, 17, and 1 Thess. v. 8 (the Christian's armour taken from the description of Israel's Warrior God), and 1 Cor. xiv. 21 (the gift of tongues illustrated by Dt. xxviii. 49, Is. xxviii. 11, 12).

*of many ; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ.*¹ He explains the abiding value of the Old Testament Scriptures for the Christian, who finds them so abundantly verified in the life and teaching of Christ. *Christ also pleased not himself, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee are fallen upon me.*² *For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that through patience and comfort of the scriptures we might have hope.*³ This verse exactly expresses St. Paul's attitude to the writings of the old dispensation. Indeed, so strongly convinced was he of the value of the Scriptures in preparing the way for Christ, that he is careful to explain that the fundamental facts of the gospel, as he both received and delivered the same, included a reference to the predictions of the death of Christ for our sins, and His resurrection on the third day. *For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures, and that he was buried ; and that he hath been raised the third day according to the scriptures.*⁴ Finally, His exaltation is described in the Messianic language of the Psalter. *For he must reign till he hath put all his enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is death. For he (i.e. the Father) put all things in subjection under his feet.*⁵ The combination of psalms viii. and cx. in this passage is particularly noteworthy. The

¹ Gal. iii. 16.² Ps. lxix. 9.³ Rom. xv. 3, 4.⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 3, 4.⁵ 1 Cor. xv. 25-27, Ps. cx. 1, Ps. viii. 6. (Allusions to the former Psalm may also be seen in Eph. i. 20, Col. iii. 1.)

latter was generally considered to indicate the superhuman origin of Messiah. *If David called him Lord, whence is he his son?* Now, according to St. Paul, it was by the resurrection that Jesus Christ was *declared to be the Son of God*.¹ After the resurrection, it was manifest to every believer that to Him had been *given all authority in heaven and earth*,² and that He held *the keys of death and of hell*.³ Thus in this wonderful chapter on Christ's victory over death, the Apostle's mind naturally turns to that psalm which, perhaps more than any other, seemed to indicate the Divine dignity of the Messianic priest and king. But this was not in itself sufficient. The resurrection of Christ was much more than an exhibition of Divine power, or a declaration of His Sonship. It was almost valueless as a doctrine, in St. Paul's mind, if it did not involve the certain conclusion that *the dead would be raised incorruptible*.⁴ *For if the dead are not raised, neither hath Christ been raised*.⁵ He is therefore at great pains to emphasize the truly human nature of our Lord, as the surest proof that He was *the firstfruits of them that are asleep*. *For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead*.⁶ It is in this connection that the eighth psalm occurred to him. It describes the true destiny of man after the Divine ideal, and his God-given realm of universal dominion.⁷ In *the man Christ Jesus* this had been fulfilled, and His victory thus became our victory. *Thanks be to God who giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our*

¹ Rom. i. 4.

² Mt. xxviii. 18.

³ Rev. i. 18.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 52.

⁵ *Ibid.* 17.

⁶ *Ibid.* 20, 21

⁷ Ps. viii. 4-6.

*Lord.*¹ It was thus in One whom the Apostle had learnt to recognize as both human and Divine that he discerned the fulfilment of those different lines of thought, so characteristic of the ideals of Hebrew prophecy.

But it was perhaps with reference to the Messianic kingdom—the rejection of Israel and the calling of the Gentiles as foreshadowed in the Old Testament—that prophecy made the deepest impression on St. Paul's mind.

Thus he rightly interprets the universalistic tendency inherent in the Abrahamic covenant. *The scripture foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand with Abraham, saying, In thee shall all the nations be blessed.*² It is, however, in the Epistle to the Romans that this idea is most fully developed. Here St. Paul appeals to the psalms and prophets as illustrating:

(1) The universal proclamation of the gospel message.

*Their sound went out to all the earth,
And their words unto the ends of the world.*³

(2) The complete accessibility, so to say, of the gospel salvation for all believers. *The righteousness which is of faith, saith thus, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is to bring Christ down); or, Who shall descend into the abyss? (that is to bring Christ up again from the dead). But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart.*⁴

¹ 1 Cor. xv. 57.

² Gal. iii. 8.

³ Rom. x. 18, Ps. xix. 4.

⁴ Rom. x. 6-8, Deut. xxx. 12 ff.

(3) The abrogation of all race privileges. *There is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for, Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.*¹

(4) Faith, the basis on which all rests. *For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be put to shame.*²

(5) The refusal of the Jews to accept the gospel. *They did not all hearken to the gospel. For Isaiah saith, Lord who hath believed our report?*³ And again: *To Israel he saith, All the day long did I spread out my hands unto a disobedient and gain-saying people.*⁴

(6) The doctrine of the remnant. *Isaiah crieth concerning Israel, If the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, it is the remnant that shall be saved.*⁵ And as Isaiah hath said before, *Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed we had become as Sodom, and had been made like unto Gomorrah.*⁶ Again: *Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elijah? What saith the answer of God to him? I have left for myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to Baal.*⁷

It is on such passages as these that St. Paul founds his belief that *God hath not cast off his people whom he foreknew*; and formulates his conclusion that *Even so at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace.*⁸

¹ Rom. x. 12, 13, Joel ii. 32.

³ x. 16, Is. liii. 1.

⁵ ix. 27, Is. x. 22.

⁷ xi. 2-4, 1 Kings xix. 10-18.

² x. 11, Is. xxviii. 11 (LXX).

⁴ x. 21, Is. lxxv. 2.

⁶ ix. 29, Is. i. 9.

⁸ xi. 2, 5.

(7) The principles of God's election.

(a) By promise. *In Isaac shall thy seed be called.*¹

(b) The absolute freedom of God's sovereign will. *Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated.*²

(8) The punishment of the disobedient Jews. *The rest were hardened, according as it is written, God gave them a spirit of stupor, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear, unto this very day.*³ *And David saith :*

*Let their table be made a stumbling block unto them . . .
Let their eyes be darkened that they see not.*⁴

(9) The calling of the Gentiles. *He called us not from the Jews only, but also from the Gentiles. As he saith also in Hosea :*

*I will call that my people which was not my people,
And her, beloved which was not beloved.*

*And it shall be that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people, there shall they be called sons of the living God.*⁵

And Isaiah is very bold and saith :

*I was found of them that sought me not,
I became manifest unto them that asked not of me.*⁶

With this we may compare the quotation in another epistle. *It is written :*

*Rejoice thou barren that bearest not,
Break forth and cry, thou that travailest not;
For more are the children of the desolate than of her which
hath the husband.*⁷

¹ Rom. ix. 7, Gen. xxi. 12.

³ xi. 8, Is. xxix. 10, Dt. xxix. 3.

⁵ ix. 24-26, Hosea ii. 23, i. 10.

⁷ Gal. iv. 27, Is. liv. 1.

² ix. 13, Mal. i. 2.

⁴ xi. 9, Ps. lxix. 23, 24.

⁶ x. 20, Is. lxv. 1.

(10) The reasons underlying Israel's fall. *Wherefore? Because they sought not righteousness by faith. . . . They stumbled at the stone of stumbling as it is written :*

Behold I lay in Zion a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence :

And he that believeth on him (or it) shall not be ashamed.¹

(11) The Divine purpose in the calling of the Gentiles. *Moses saith :*

I will provoke you to jealousy with that which is no nation, With a nation void of understanding will I anger you.²

i.e. that in the end all Israel should be saved.

(12) The acceptance of Messiah's rule by both Jew and Gentile :

There shall come out of Zion (Heb. to Zion) the deliverer, He shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

And this is my covenant unto them,

When I shall take away their sins.³

And again he saith :

Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people.⁴

And again :

Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles,

And let all the peoples praise him.⁵

And again, Isaiah saith :

There shall be a root of Jesse,

And he that ariseth to rule over the Gentiles,

On him shall the Gentiles hope.⁶

¹ Rom. ix. 32, 33, Is. viii. 14, xxviii. 16 (a combination of two passages, which recurs in 1 Pet. ii. 6).

² Rom. x. 19, Dt. xxxii. 21.

³ Rom. xi. 26, 27, Is. lix. 20, xxvii. 9.

⁴⁻⁶ Rom. xv. 10-12.

⁴ Deut. xxxii. 43.

⁵ Ps. cxvii. 1.

⁶ Is. xi. 10.

(13) The world-wide mission and diffusion of Christianity. Missionary zeal will penetrate to the remotest nations.

*They shall see, to whom no tidings of him came,
And they who have not heard shall understand*¹

(a passage which also illustrates St. Paul's own principle of not building upon another man's foundation).

(14) The persecutions Christians may be called upon to suffer. *Even as it is written:*

*For thy sake are we killed all the day long;
We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.*²

(15) The final consummation. *We shall all stand before the judgement seat of God. For it is written:*

*As I live, saith the Lord, to me every knee shall bow,
And every tongue shall confess to God.*³

We must remember that from St. Paul himself we learn that the judgement seat of God is identical with the judgement seat of Christ,⁴ and that the true interpretation of every tongue confessing to God is to be found in realizing that all creation *will proclaim with thanksgiving (confess) that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.*⁵

Such, then, is the effect of these Messianic prophecies on the mind of St. Paul. They raise many interesting questions. In some cases we have accurate citations from the Hebrew, in others the loose paraphrases of the Septuagint, in others again independent translations. At one time we are confronted with a Midrashic, or allegorical system

¹ Rom. xv. 21, Is. lii. 15.

² viii. 36, Ps. xlv. 22.

³ xiv. 11, Is. xlv. 23.

⁴ 2 Cor. v. 10.

⁵ Phil. ii. 10.

of exegesis, at another with merely illustrative comments, at yet another with a closely reasoned argument. Now his method of quotation is violently unhistorical, now in thorough keeping both with the spirit and the letter of the original utterance. It cannot, however, be doubted that as a rule St. Paul seizes the central idea of the prophet's or psalmist's meaning, and it would be quite impossible to dispute the correctness of the Apostle's conviction that Christ hath been made a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, *that he might confirm the promises unto the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy*; as it is written, *Therefore will I* (Christ, as the second David, is the speaker) *give praise unto thee among the Gentiles and sing unto thy name.*¹

§ III. THE USE OF PROPHECY IN THE EPISTLE OF ST. PETER.

The speeches of St. Peter as they are recorded in the Acts lead us to expect much interest in Messianic prophecy to be exhibited in the Epistle which bears his name. Nor shall we be disappointed. In the Epistle St. Peter "shows the same marvellous grasp of the prophecy of the Old Testament that we have observed in his discourses in the book of Acts. He cites and compacts together many different passages of the Old Testament, and traces the lines of several distinct Messianic ideals in the Messianic kingdom of grace."² It will greatly conduce to

¹ Rom. xv. 8, 9, Ps. xviii. 49.

² Briggs, *Messiah of Apostles*, 53.

clearness if we examine St. Peter's quotations under the two heads, as they refer respectively to the Messiah, and to the kingdom He came to inaugurate. There are, however, as we should expect, several passages of prophecy quoted, not for their Messianic character, but for their apt illustration of the principles the Apostle is seeking to enforce.

Thus the abiding value of the word of God is substantiated by a reference to Isaiah :

All flesh is as grass, and all the glory thereof as the flower of grass.

*The grass withereth, and the flower falleth,
But the word of the Lord endureth for ever.*

And this is *the word of good tidings preached unto you.*¹

Or, again, the rule of Christian life is expressed in the words of the psalmist. *For herewith were ye called that ye should inherit a blessing. For*

He that would love life and see good days,

Let him refrain his tongue from evil,

And his lips that they speak no guile.

For the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous,

And his ears (open) unto their supplications :

*But the face of the Lord is upon them that do evil.*²

These passages are introduced, without any formula of citation, quite naturally and spontaneously, much in the same manner as a modern preacher often unconsciously expresses himself in the language of Scripture.

Passing now to the prophecies dealing with the Messiah, we notice first a series of quotations suggested by the applicability of the title *stone*

¹ 1 Pet. i. 24, 25, Is. xl. 6-9. ² 1 Pet. iii. 9-12, Ps. xxxiv. 12-16.

to Christ. The Master had Himself quoted Ps. cxviii. in this connection, and St. Peter speaking before the Sanhedrim had again called their attention to the significant warning it conveyed. It now recurs to his mind. Christ is a *living stone, rejected, indeed, of men, but with God elect, precious . . . because it is contained in scripture,*

*Behold I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious,
And he that believeth on him (or on it) shall not be put
to shame.¹*

*For you therefore which believe is the preciousness,
but for such as disbelieve*

*The stone which the builders rejected,
The same was made the head of the corner;²*

And

A stone of stumbling and a rock of offence.³

We have already discussed the original meaning of these passages. The first two refer to the unalterable, irrefragable purpose of God as manifested in Jehovah's choice of Zion, and the preservation of Israel from the heathen world powers. The last quotation describes God's rejection of *both houses of Israel*. The words are most aptly quoted in illustration of the mission of Jesus Christ, and the first and third passages are found combined in the writings of St. Paul. There they occur with precisely the same variations from the original Hebrew (not due to the LXX, from which they differ widely), as are noticeable in this Epistle. If the Apostles

^{1 2 3} I Pet. ii. 4, 6-8.

¹ Is. xxviii. 16.

² Ps. cxviii. 22.

³ Is. viii. 14.

are independent of each other, there seems every likelihood of both having borrowed from a common source—perhaps from some collection of *Testimonia* such as seem to have been compiled very early for the benefit of Christian preachers and controversialists.¹

But it is in his complete identification of Jesus with the suffering Servant that St. Peter is at his best as an interpreter of Old Testament prophecy. Speaking to *servants* who often suffered much from unreasonable masters, he points to *the* Servant who *also suffered for you, leaving you an example that ye should follow his steps, who did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth; who, when he was reviled, reviled not again; when he suffered, he threatened not, but committed himself to him that judgeth righteously; who his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed. For ye were as sheep going astray, but are now returned unto the shepherd and bishop of your souls.*²

This most beautiful passage is of unique importance as showing how the Apostles appropriated and developed the sublimest thoughts of prophetic literature. We may especially notice two points. First, Christ is here represented as the sinless, sin-bearing victim. In the words of the prophet as rendered in LXX, αὐτὸς ἀμαρτίας πολλῶν ἀνήνεγκε. But ἀναφέρειν is constantly used in the LXX of the sacrificial action of the priest; and the phrase ἀνήνεγκεν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον seems to contain an intentional reference to the

¹ Cf. the combination of prophecies in Mk. i. 2, 3, and Cyprian's *Testimonia*, where one chapter is entitled *Quod idem et lapis dictus sit*.

² 1 Pet. ii. 18-25, Is. liii. 9, 12, 5, 6.

common expression—ἀναφέρειν ἐπὶ τὸ θυσιαστήριον. Thus "the turn which St. Peter has given to the words represents Christ as not only the sin-offering, who bore the consequences of the sins of His people on the Cross of shame (ἤνεγκεν ἐπὶ τῷ ξύλῳ), but as the priest who took the sins, or the sin-offering (ἡ ἁμαρτία = τὰ περὶ τῆς ἁμαρτίας, Lev. vi. 26), and laid the sacrifice on the altar of the Cross (ἀνήνεγκεν ἐπὶ τὸ ξύλον)." ¹ In other words, Christ is both victim and priest.

Secondly, perhaps with reference to this passage, St. Peter viewed Christ *as the lamb without blemish and without spot, who was foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but was manifested at the end of the times for your sake.*² Christ was prefigured by the paschal lamb, and by His *precious blood* the children of spiritual Israel also obtained *redemption*. But the fact that the Apostle had compared Christ to the sacrificial lamb does not deter him from regarding Him in the later passage as the Shepherd, seeking, and dying for, the sheep that have gone astray. The image of the Shepherd would revive all the tenderest recollections of the O.T. Scriptures, and also the words of the Master, when He spoke of the *good shepherd* laying down *his life for the sheep*.

But if St. Peter saw in Christ the fulfilment of the suffering Servant, he saw no less in His resurrection the accomplishment of the glorious ideals of the psalms with reference to the victory of the Messianic king. He *is* on the right hand of God, *having gone into heaven, angels and authorities and*

¹ Bigg, *I.C.C. Epp. St. Peter*, 147.

² 1 Pet. i. 19, 20.

*powers being subjected unto him.*¹ Surely, it is not too much to see in this passage a distinct allusion to those Messianic psalms which, as we have already noticed, were combined by St. Paul in his description of the final consummation of Messiah's triumph. As the superhuman King, Jesus Christ *is on the right hand of God* (Ps. cx.). As the ideal Son of Man, He received the *submission* of the universe, even the heavenly intelligences being *subjected* to His dominion (Ps. viii.).

Finally, St. Peter does not shrink from definitely applying to Christ the words of the Old Testament, in which the prophets spoke of Jehovah. *Fear not their fear, neither be troubled; but sanctify in your hearts Christ as Lord.*² Κύριος in the original represents Jehovah (יהוה). Nothing could more decisively illustrate the view of our Lord's Person as held by St. Peter.

It will thus be seen that the Christology of the Epistle is particularly rich and full. Suffering servant and victorious king, priest and victim, lamb and shepherd, Son of God and Son of Man, all these ideas are combined by St. Peter in his conception of the character and work of our Lord. And what is yet more important for our present purpose, all those ideas lie at the root of those great prophetic anticipations which prepared the way for Jesus Christ.

But it is not only in the Person of Jesus Christ that St. Peter sees the fulfilment of prophecy. The Christian Church is, to him, heir to all the glorious responsibilities and privileges of ancient Israel.

¹ 1 Pet. iii. 21, 22.

² 1 Pet. iii. 14, Is. viii. 12, 13.

Thus each member of the Christian body is called to be holy, to strive to fulfil the true law of holiness. *Like as he which called you is holy, be ye yourselves also holy in all manner of living; because it is written, Ye shall be holy; for I am holy.*¹ "Although Greek philosophers spoke of 'assimilation to God,' Greek literature is full of the vain struggle to find in imitation of the gods a religious base for morality in the face of the immoralities which the popular mythology ascribed to the gods. In receiving with the gospel the faith in the Holy One of Israel, the heathen were furnished with a standard of living and aspiration which abolished the fatal chasm between morality and religion."²

Such, then, were the responsibilities of the new community; St. Peter now turns to describe its privileges:

*But ye are "an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession,
That ye may shew forth the excellencies of him" that called you, . . .
Which in time past were "no people," but now are "the people of God":
Which "had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."*³

All these titles—anciently used of Israel—are now transferred to the Church in her corporate capacity. A new brotherhood based on spiritual relationship has superseded the national family, based on physical kinship. "St. Peter applies to

¹ 1 Pet. i. 16; Lev. xi. 44, xiv. 2. ² Hort, *Ep. Pet.* 71.

³ 1 Pet. ii. 9, 10; Is. xliii. 20; Ex. xix. 5; Hos. i. 6, 8; ii. 1, 23; Hosea i. 6, 8; ii. 1, 23.

the whole body of the Asiatic Churches, Gentles and Jews alike, the language which in the Old Testament describes the prerogatives of God's ancient people. . . . He regarded the Christian Church as first and foremost the true Israel of God, the one legitimate heir of the promises made to Israel, the one community which, by receiving Israel's Messiah, had remained true to Israel's covenant. . . . This is the true key to most of the use of the Old Testament in the New Testament generally, and it has specially to be remembered in this Epistle."¹

To each individual member of this spiritual community is given the endowment promised in pre-eminent measure to the theocratic king. *On you resteth the spirit of glory and the spirit of God.*² The time has come when the prayer of Moses has been fulfilled, for all the Lord's people are prophets, and the Lord has put His spirit upon all.

In reviewing St. Peter's use of prophecy, we are struck with the simple directness of his quotations. We are not confronted with any historical difficulties; we are not called upon to justify any system of Midrashic interpretation. All is straightforward and natural. And this will cause us no surprise, if we take into consideration the view as to the functions and limitations of prophecy which arrests us in the opening chapter. *Concerning which salvation the prophets sought and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace to you-ward, searching what time or what manner of time the spirit of Christ which was in them did point unto, when it testified beforehand*

¹ Hort, *op. cit.* 7. ² iv. 14; Is. xi. 2.

the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them (τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας). *To whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves but unto you did they minister these things which have now been announced unto you.*¹

It is no exaggeration to say that this passage is perhaps the most important declaration on the Christian view of Old Testament prophecy. But before proceeding to the elucidation of its main ideas, it will be well to note two remarkable correspondences with the words of our Lord. First, with regard to the limitation of the prophets' view, the Lord had declared: *Blessed are the eyes which see the things that ye see, for I say unto you that many prophets and kings desired to see the things which ye see, and saw them not; and to hear the things which ye hear and heard them not.*²

And again, the Lord Himself summarized the teaching of *all the prophets concerning himself* in words remarkably similar to those here employed to mark the substance of the prophetic witness: *Behoved it not the Christ to suffer these things and to enter into his glory?*³

These remarkable coincidences between the teaching of St. Peter and our Lord—extending even to the use of almost the same words—seem to afford some corroboration of the view which on other grounds we

¹ I Pet. i. 10-12. ² Lk. x. 23, 24; Mat. xiii. 16, 17.

³ Lk. xxiv. 25, 26. The Greek will make the similarity between the two passages still plainer.

ST. PETER. τὰ εἰς Χριστὸν παθήματα καὶ τὰς μετὰ ταῦτα δόξας.

OUR LORD. οὐχὶ ταῦτα ἔδει παθεῖν τὸν Χριστὸν καὶ εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὴν δόξαν αὐτοῦ;

have seen good reason to believe is correct, that St. Peter was much influenced by the Lord's allusions to prophecy in His post-resurrection teaching.

Let us now examine the main thoughts on Old Testament prophecy to which the Apostle here gives utterance.

(1) He points to the office of the prophets as *preparing the way* of the Lord. This preparation was twofold.

(a) As to Messiah Himself, he specially notices :

- i. The sufferings that were to come upon Him.
- ii. The successive manifestations of glory which would subsequently ensue. (δόξαι. Perhaps the plural refers to the resurrection, ascension, exaltation, second advent.)

(β) As to Christians—Gentile Christians—εἰς ὑμᾶς, ὑμῖν, ὑμῖν.

- i. Their participation in the Messianic salvation (περὶ ἧς σωτηρίας).
- ii. The special grace to you (περὶ τῆς εἰς ὑμᾶς χάριτος), which can only be interpreted as the inclusion of the Gentiles in the Messianic kingdom.

(2) The inspiration of the prophets. They did not arrive at their anticipations unaided. It was not they who conjectured, but *the spirit of Christ in them that showed, the things that should come to pass*. These difficult words, τὸ ἐν αὐτοῖς πνεῦμα Χριστοῦ, are taken by Hort to mean "the Messianic spirit." But such an interpretation hardly does justice to the language of the Apostle or to the context in which it is found. We surely must include a reference

to the historical Jesus; and if so, the phrase must either be taken as signifying *the Spirit which is Christ*, or perhaps *the Spirit sent by Christ*, for the Spirit is regarded by St. Peter as the author of prophecy,¹ and the sending of the Spirit is attributed by him to Christ.² The reference to the mission of the Holy Spirit in the next verse—which cannot be other than an allusion to His descent on the day of Pentecost—is a confirmation of the latter view. It was *one and the same Spirit* who lighted upon the Apostles to give life to the Church, and who inspired the prophets in their work of preparation. Here then we find emphasized that idea of the continuity of revelation which also finds expression in the Epistle to the Hebrews, and is endorsed by the Christian's profession of belief in the Holy Spirit, who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified, who spake by the prophets.

(3) The limitations of prophecy. The prophets sought diligently and enquired, but could not discover the time or the manner of the fulfilment of their predictions. "Prophetic consciousness did not involve a distinct knowledge of the events foretold; that which the Holy Ghost presignified was only in part clear to the prophets both as to the date of fulfilment and also as to historical shaping."³ We thus have a contrast drawn between the Divine inspiration and the prophetic limitations. There is, then, a human element of which we must take account in dealing with the writings of the prophets. After the Divine communications, there was yet open a field for

¹ Acts i. 16.

² ii. 33.

³ Knowling, *Acts*, 87.

enquiry, for searching. Much was clear, but much was yet obscure. Much they saw, but much they did not see, "and longed and strove for a clearer vision."

(4) The objective of prophecy. *Not unto themselves, but unto you.* The prophets learned that the realization of their hopes must be deferred. Of course St. Peter does not intend to deny that the prophets *ministered* to their own generation; and we have seen that it was of the essence of prophecy to address itself to contemporary requirements and circumstances. But it must have been obvious to the prophets themselves that some of their most glowing anticipations could only attain complete realization in a future, which, as time proceeded, appeared to grow more and more remote. It was therefore revealed to them that the fulfilment of their prophecies belonged to another age, and that consequently their ministry had a wider significance than merely for their own generation. Moreover, "the uses of prophecy did not cease when it attained its principal fulfilment. In making known the actual appearing of the promised Messiah, the Apostles found the old prophetic word endued with new power and instructiveness, as the Acts and Epistles abundantly attest."¹

Before concluding our section on the use of prophecy in the First Epistle of St. Peter, we may call attention to the main conception which it is quoted to enforce. Dr. Bigg draws a most instructive contrast in this respect between the circle of ideas respectively characteristic of St. Peter and St. Paul. "To St. Peter the essence of the Gospel

¹ Hort, *Ep. Pet.* 57.

seems to lie in suffering and glory ; to St. Paul in free grace and deliverance from law. Hence the former sees a just and permanent picture of the Christian life in Is. liii., while the latter looks back not to the prophets (except Hab. ii. 4) but to Abraham. . . . Further, in St. Peter's view the great obstacle to Christianity is the suffering of Christ. But in the view of St. Paul the great obstacle is the tendency of men to rely upon their own merits."¹

We would only notice as an evidence of the genuineness both of the Epistle and of the Petrine speeches in the Acts, the extraordinarily interesting picture we have presented to us of the development of St. Peter's mind in relation to the idea of a suffering Messiah. In the Gospels he could not tolerate such a thought. When our Lord predicted His rejection and death, the impetuous Apostle rebuked his Master. *Be it far from thee, Lord ! this shall never happen unto thee.*² In the Acts he has come to see that those sufferings were part of the Divine plan, as was also Messiah's subsequent triumph, but the two ideas are merely co-ordinated ; they have no relation to each other but that of time. All he sees is that *it was needful that the scripture should be fulfilled.*³ In the Epistle St. Peter has discovered the spiritual connection between suffering and victory. "Suffering is part of that testing process without which no moral destiny can be complete. The path of humiliation was the way to the Messiah's true glory and crown, and He has left us *an example that we should follow his steps.*"⁴ If

¹ Bigg, *I.C.C. Ep. Pet.* 110. ² Mt. xvi. 23. ³ Acts i. 16.

⁴ Stevens, *Theology of N.T.* 295. 1 Pet. ii. 21.

we ask how this development was effected, the answer is plain. It was prophecy which prepared St. Peter's mind, and no doubt the minds of many another Christian, to accept the paradox of Christianity—*Via crucis, via lucis*.

The writer of the Second Epistle of St. Peter, whoever he may have been, also attached much importance to the argument from prophecy, especially in view of the fact that false prophets were beginning to disturb the peace of the Church. *And we have the yet surer voice of prophecy, whereunto ye do well to take heed, as unto a lamp shining in a dark place . . . knowing this first that no prophecy of scriptures is of private interpretation. For no prophecy ever came by the will of man, but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Ghost.*¹

There is, then, a right and a wrong method of interpretation. As the Spirit inspired the utterances of the prophets, so also must His aid be invoked in elucidating their meaning. As prophecy *never came by the will of man*, so *by the will of man* it can never be explained. There is a Divine meaning underlying all Scripture, of which the reader must take due account, lest he wrest the sacred words to *his own destruction*.²

§ IV. THE USE OF PROPHECY IN THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

The author of this Epistle, whether he were Apollos or not, undoubtedly suits the description of

¹ 2 Pet. i. 19-21.

² iii. 17.

the latter given in the Acts. *He was a learned man, mighty in the scriptures, and he powerfully confuted the Jews and that publicly, showing by the scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.*¹

This is also the object of the Epistle to the Hebrews. The author's contention is that the whole law was itself a prophecy of Him who should *fulfil all righteousness*. He therefore sets himself to bring out the great ideas underlying the law, and is thus led to develop his central doctrines of the universal and eternal high-priesthood of Christ. In this spiritual interpretation of the law, he finds the greatest help from both the psalms and the prophets.

In the opening verses of the Epistle the writer states his theme—*God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken unto us in his Son . . . who . . . when he had made purification of sins, sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high.*²

The main points to notice in this passage are as follows :

(1) God is the Author of both the old and new dispensations—ὁ θεὸς λάλησας . . . ἐλάλησεν. Revelation is continuous and progressive. The final revelation through the Son stands in the most intimate connection with the preparatory revelation through prophecy.

(2) The earlier revelation *in the prophets* had been fragmentary and provisional, and hence is contrasted with the full and final revelation in Christ.

¹ Acts. xvii. 14-28.

² Heb. i. 1-3.

(3) The prophets stood in the same relation to the Divine revelation in the Old Testament as did Christ to that in the New.

(4) The office of Christ is viewed in its three-fold character of

PROPHET. ὁ θεὸς ἐλάλησεν ἐν νύμφῃ

PRIEST. ὃς καθαρισμὸν τῶν ἁμαρτιῶν ποιησάμενος

KING. ἐκάθισεν ἐν δεξίᾳ. κ.τ.λ.

The writer immediately proceeds to prove from Scripture the superiority of the Son to all created beings whether angels or men. *For unto which of the angels said he at any time,*

*Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee?*¹

and again,

*I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a son.*²

And again, when he bringeth in the firstborn into the world, he saith,

*And let all the angels of God worship him.*³

The first two passages bring out the relation of the theocratic King to Jehovah, the third quotation refers in the original to Jehovah's final coming to judgment. It was perhaps by identifying the Old Testament *Day of the Lord* with the Parousia of Christ that the Apostles were most naturally led to apply to our Lord language addressed to Jehovah.

These three citations are then introduced to show the essential dignity of the Son, as Son. This is "asserted in three connections, in its foundation

¹ Ps. ii. 7. ² 2 Sam. vii. 14.

³ Ps. xxvii. 7, but cf. LXX, Deut. xxxii. 43.

¹⁻³ Heb. i. 5, 6.

(σήμερον γεγέννηκά σε); in its continuance (ἔσομαι αὐτῷ εἰς πατέρα); and in its final manifestation (ὅταν πάλιν εἰσαγάγῃ)."¹

Very different is the language of the Old Testament with reference to the angels:

*He maketh his angels, winds; and his ministers, a flame of fire.*²

But of the Son;

Thy throne, O God, is (or, Thy throne is God) for ever and ever,

And the sceptre of uprightness is the sceptre of thy kingdom,

Therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee

*With the oil of gladness above thy fellows.*³

And

Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth,

And the heavens are the works of thy hands.

They shall perish; but thou continuest;

And they shall all wax old as doth a garment;

*But thou art the same and thy years shall not fail.*⁴

Here then we have a double contrast between the Son and the angels.

(1) The psalmist addressed the Messianic king in the most glowing language. He had been Divinely anointed above all his fellows. His dominion is eternal, his kingdom based on uprightness, his joy is unique. It may be that to him is even applied the title of "God."

Such language is never used of the angels; they are identified with, or compared to, the elemental

¹ Westcott, *Ep. Heb.* 19.

² Ps. civ. 4.

³ Ps. xlv. 7, 8.

⁴ Ps. cii. 26, 27.

²⁻⁴ Heb. i. 7-12.

forces of nature, subject to constant change; the services of the angels are material, physical, transitory; the sovereignty of the Son is personal, moral, and permanent.

(2) The angels are created beings (ὁ ποιῶν). Contrast with this the magnificent description of the power and immutability of the Creator. In Him the psalmist of course recognized Jehovah. But to those who believed with the writer that the Son was *the express image of the Father's glory*, and that *through him he had made the worlds*, the words would seem equally applicable to the manifestation of God through the Son in the work of creation.

This chapter closes with a significant reference. *But of which of the angels hath he said at any time,*

*Sit thou on my right hand,
Till I make thine enemies the footstool of thy feet.*¹

No single passage of Scripture has had a greater effect on Christian thought, or the expression of Christian truth, than the opening words of the 110th psalm. To it the Lord had appealed when seeking to lead His hearers to a juster appreciation of the true character and nature of the Son of David.² With these words St. Peter had sought in his first sermon to clinch his whole argument, and substantiate the claim of Jesus to be the Messiah.³ By these words St. Paul illustrated the final consummation of the reign of Christ.⁴ The psalm prepared men's minds for the idea of the session at the right hand

¹ Ps. cx. 1, Heb. i. 13.

² Mk. xii. 36 (and parallels).

³ Acts ii. 34.

⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 25.

of God,¹ and when that idea was transferred into the realm of historical experience, provided the language most suitable for the expression of the doctrine.²

Here, then, the writer closes his appeal to the testimony of Scripture in evidence of the supreme dignity of the Son by citing the psalm—universally admitted to be Messianic—which so emphatically describes the transcendent majesty of the theocratic king.

Now, all these references to the Old Testament stand in vital connection with the author's main argument. He had, when announcing his theme, declared his belief in the Divinely ordered preparation for Christianity *in the prophets*. He had, moreover, suggested the threefold division of our Lord's office into that of prophet, priest, and king. His closing words are . . . *he sat down on the right hand of the majesty on high*. This idea of the unique sovereignty of the Son he at once undertakes to prove from the Scriptures.

We thus have in this opening chapter a summary of Old Testament evidence to the Kingship of Christ.

(1) Ps. ii. 7. The declaration by Jehovah's decree of the Divine Sonship of His anointed. The single verse quoted would naturally recall the other promises of the psalm—Messiah's universal dominion and victorious rule.

(2) 2 Sam. vii. 14. The prophetic promise to David of a king of his line who should fulfil the theocratic ideal—the restoration of the union between God and man.

¹ Cf. Acts vii. 55, 56, Eph. i. 20, Col. iii. 1, 1 Pet. iii. 22, Apoc. iii. 21. ² Cf. esp. Mk. xvi. 19.

(3) Ps. xcvi. 7. The coming of God to judgment, and the homage rendered to Him by all creation.

(4) Ps. xlv. 7, 8. The moral and eternal sovereignty of the Messianic prince contrasted with the mutability and transitoriness of angelic services (Ps. civ. 3).

(5) Ps. cii. 26, 27. The Divine nature as discerned in creation.

(6) Ps. cx. 1. The exaltation of the Divine King, and His session at the right hand of God.

Of these six (seven)¹ quotations four (five) are perfectly in their place as Messianic prophecies. Words were used by the prophets and psalmists of a human king, which they never thought of applying to an angelic being, however exalted (*οὐ γὰρ δὴ ποὺ ἀγγέλων ἐπιλαμβάνεται*).² But such anticipations were never realized under the old Dispensation, because they expressed hopes that transcended all human experience, nay, even all human possibility. They were, indeed, incapable of fulfilment save in the person of *the man Christ Jesus* in whom at the same time dwelt *the fulness of the Godhead*. The belief of the Apostles in the Divinity of Christ is a necessary corollary from their application to Him of the titles and functions exclusively reserved by the Old Testament for Jehovah. They believed that God's judgment would be mediated through Christ, and hence they had no hesitation in applying all passages describing Jehovah's personal advent and final judgment, to the second coming of our Lord to judge both the quick and the dead. Again, they believed that through Christ the worlds were created,

¹ *I.e.* including Ps. civ. 3.

² Heb. ii. 16.

and hence the Psalmist's address to Jehovah as Creator seemed to them equally appropriate as a description of Him through whom all things were made.

Though somewhat unhistorical, we cannot say, if we take into consideration other elements, such as the idea of mediation, which figure so prominently in prophetic literature, that this line of interpretation lacks justification. On the other hand, the immense importance of such prophecies in determining the leading conceptions of Christian theology cannot fail to be recognized.

The writer of the Epistle having considered the office of Christ as king and Son of God prefigured in the Old Testament, now proceeds to view Him as prophet and Son of Man, and again finds prophetic preparation for this truth also.

First and foremost he calls emphatic attention to the fact that the promise of Divine sovereignty was made not to angels but to man. In support of this position he quotes a passage of Scripture which, while recognizing man's infirmity and deprecating, as it were, God's condescension, nevertheless refuses to believe that human frailty could permanently invalidate the Divine promise of man's high dignity and destiny.

*What is man that thou art mindful of him, and the son
of man that thou visitest him?*

Thou madest him little lower than the angels:

Thou crownedst him with glory and honour . . .

Thou didst put all things in subjection under his feet.¹

But this picture is contradicted by experience. Once more the ideal has not been realized. *But*

¹ Ps. viii. 4-6, Heb. ii. 6-9.

*now we see not yet all things subjected to him (i.e. to man).*¹ However, in *Jesus* (notice the use of our Lord's human name) the right relation between God and man has been restored. He has won for Himself a complete, for mankind a potential, fulfilment of this promise. *We behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels, even Jesus . . . crowned with glory and honour.*¹ A difficulty has sometimes been felt in the form of this quotation. In the original, the psalmist is describing the dignity of man's nature. *Thou madest him but a little lower than God.* Here, however, the expression denotes humiliation. *Made a little (or for a little while) lower than the angels.* It must be obvious, however, that the essential meaning of the psalm sustains very little modification by this change, and it must also be borne in mind that for one who was *in the form of God* to take human nature upon Him (however exalted that might relatively be), was an act of infinite condescension.

The writer continues to insist on the true humanity of Christ and His *perfection* through suffering. *He is not ashamed to call men his brethren, saying,*

*I will declare thy name unto my brethren,
In the midst of the congregation will I hymn thee.*²

And again,

*I will put my trust in him.*³

And again,

*Behold I and the children which God hath given me.*⁴

¹ Heb. ii. 8, 9.

^{2 3 4} Heb. ii. 12-13.

² Ps. xxii. 22.

^{3 4} Is. viii. 17.

Here the prophetic character of Christ is illustrated. The Servant of Jehovah, after much suffering and persecution, is at length rewarded, but in the hour of victory he does not forget his kinship with his brethren. To them first he can declare the wonderful goodness of God.

Or, again, the prophet Isaiah in a time of national distress, can yet feel secure in his own faith in Jehovah, and can also point to the *sign* conveyed to the men of that generation by his own and his children's names, that his prophecies would be fulfilled, that though *booty hasteth, spoil speedeth* (Mahar-shalal-hash-baz) yet *God is his salvation* (Isaiah) and a *remnant shall return* (Shear-jashub), though but a remnant, to the mighty God.

In these respects the prophecies were eminently applicable to Jesus Christ. He too had passed through suffering to glory. He too had placed absolute reliance on His heavenly Father. He too was encouraged and consoled by the little band of disciples that gathered round Him, and whom He had taught to pray to their Father in heaven. He too proclaimed the universality of the Fatherhood of God. We may, perhaps, specially note in this connection the language of our Lord's high-priestly prayer, *Father . . . I have manifested thy name* (cf. Ps. xxii. 22), *to the men whom thou gavest me from the world* (cf. Is. viii. 17). *For their sake I sanctify myself, that they also may be sanctified in truth* (cf. Heb. ii. 11, *He that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one*). *Not for these only do I pray, but for them also that believe on me through their word that they may all be one* (cf. Heb. ii. 11, *are all*

of one). *And the glory that thou hast given me I have given them* (cf. Heb. ii. 10, *bringing many sons to glory*) *that they may be perfected* (cf. Heb. ii. 10, *to make perfect*) *into one, that the world may believe and know that thou sentest me and lovedst them, as thou lovedst me.*¹

The very striking linguistic correspondence between these two passages will direct our attention to the complete fulfilment of these prophetic ideas in Jesus. In His words we see what meaning must be attached to *the children which God hath given me*, and to Messiah's declaration of God's name among His brethren. *Thy Name.* "Nomen tuum quod est Pater, ut cognoscant Te Patrem qui eos paterno affectu ad haereditatem supernae beatitudinis ut filios vocas."²

Christ, therefore, is the true prophet, but if so, how great a responsibility on the part of those to whom the good tidings are preached. The author, therefore, quotes the warning of Ps. xcv. *Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith,*

*To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts.
As in the provocation,
Like as in the day of temptation in the wilderness, . . .
Wherefore I was displeased with this generation. . . .
As I swore in my wrath,
They shall not enter into my rest.*³

He bids his readers lay to heart these solemn words on the dangers of *disobedience* and *unbelief*.

The writer's insistence on the humanity of Jesus had prepared the way for his exposition of the

¹ Cf. Jn. xvii. 6, 20-23. ² Herveius, cited by Westcott, *Ep. Heb.* 51.

³ Heb. iii. 7-11, Ps. xcv. 7-11.

doctrine of His high-priesthood. Sympathy was an essential characteristic of a high priest. *Wherefore it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of his people.*¹ And once more the author discovered in what *God spake of old time to the fathers in the prophets* much that could not fail to be of assistance to the adequate Christian apprehension of the truth. He therefore cites prophecy as a witness to Christ's office of priest in three particulars.

- (1) The nature of the high-priesthood to which He was appointed.
- (2) The nature of the sacrifice which He offered.
- (3) The nature of the covenant which He inaugurated.

Let us glance at the writer's use of prophecy in these connections.

(1) The nature of Christ's priestly office. Christ's priesthood was conferred by God, and confirmed by an oath.

The Lord sware and will not repent.

*Thou art a priest for ever, after the order of Melchizedek.*²

The writer seizes upon these last words, and endeavours to unfold their meaning. He puts before his readers the scriptural presentation of Melchizedek:

For this Melchizedek, king of Salem, priest of God most high, who met Abraham and blessed him, to whom also Abraham gave a tithe, being first, by interpretation, king of righteousness, and then also

¹ Heb. ii. 17.

² Ps. cx. 4.

*king of Salem, which is king of peace ; without father, without mother, without genealogy, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but made like unto the Son of God, abideth a priest continually.*¹

Scripture, then, bears witness to a higher ideal of priesthood than that conveyed by the Levitical or Aaronic institution. And it is after the order of this higher priesthood that the Messiah was appointed by the Divine will. The contrast between the two priesthoods is skilfully brought out ; and Christ's high priesthood is shown to be immutable, universal, sovereign, final—all these deductions being drawn from the superiority of the spiritual and unchanging priesthood of Melchizedek over the natural, transitory, limited priesthood of Aaron and his sons.

(2) The sacrifice that he offered was *the sacrifice of himself*.² The ritual of the law was intended to lead men to feel a consciousness of sin, and the need of forgiveness through sacrifice. *According to the law, I may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood, and apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission. It was necessary therefore that the copies of the things in the heavens should be cleansed with these ; but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these.*³ *For if the blood of bulls and of goats sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal spirit offered himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your consciences from dead works to serve the living God ?*⁴ The prophets had

¹ Heb. vii. 1-3.

² ix. 26.

³ ix. 22, 23.

⁴ *Ibid.* 13, 14.

already pointed to the insufficiency of the old sacrifices, and the true character of that offering which would be acceptable to God. Therefore Christ speaking through the psalmist, *when he cometh into the world he saith,*

Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body didst thou prepare for me.

In whole burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin, thou hadst no pleasure,

Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God.¹

There are several passages in the O.T. which disparage ritual service, and demonstrate the inefficacy of the sacrificial system *in itself*. The sacrifices *by themselves* gave no pleasure to God, their value lay in the truth they represented. This was a commonplace of prophecy. The psalmist, however, goes beyond such passages, as he not only points out the inadequacy of the Levitical sacrifices, but points out the great reality of which sacrifices were the symbol, and how this truth might find accomplishment in man's entire devotion and rational self-surrender to the will of God. It was only by the perfect obedience of Christ to his Father's will as exhibited most decisively in His willing death, that humanity through its representative rose to a true appreciation of God's righteousness, and of the manner of at-onement with Him, and that thus the need for sacrifices was for ever abolished. *Saying above, Sacrifices and offerings thou wouldst not (the which are offered according to the law), then hath he said, Lo ! I am come to do thy will. He taketh away the first that he may establish the second. By which will we have*

¹ Heb. x. 4, 5, Ps. xl. 6-8.

*been sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.*¹

The author of the Epistle here quotes from the LXX, which translates the Hebrew, *Ears hast thou opened unto me* (אָזְנוֹיִם פָּרַתָּ לִי), by the curious rendering, σῶμα κατηρτίσω μοι. This may be no more than a loose paraphrase due to the obscurity of the original, or it may be due to a textual corruption (σῶμα representing ὤτα and the repetition of the final s in ἐθέλησας). But whatever the origin of this rendering it makes practically no difference to the fundamental idea of the passage. "As the ear is the instrument for receiving the Divine command, so the body is the instrument for fulfilling it. The possession of a body implies the duty of service in the same way that the possession of hearing implies the duty of obedience."²

(3) Had the preceding quotation been continued we should have heard the psalmist's thankful acknowledgment that *thy law is within my heart*. This spiritual apprehension of God's will was one of the characteristics of the new covenant predicted by Jeremiah. Now the fact that the Divine appointment to His high-priestly office tended to show that *Jesus hath become the surety of a better covenant*.³ The writer soon recurs to this conception. *Now hath he obtained a ministry the more excellent, by how much also he is the mediator of a better covenant which hath been enacted upon better promises.*⁴ He then proceeds to quote at length the famous prophecy of Jeremiah concerning the new covenant.⁵

¹ Heb. x. 8-10.

² Kirkpatrick, *Psalms*, 212.

³ Heb. vii. 20-22.

⁴ Heb. viii. 6.

⁵ Jer. xxxi. 31-34; Heb. viii. 8-13, x. 16, 17.

The willing obedience of Christ, and His heart-knowledge of God's law finds its counterpart in the spiritual enlightenment of even the humblest member of the new community.

Two conclusions are drawn by the author of this Epistle from the words of Jeremiah: (1) *If that first covenant had been faultless, then would no place have been found for a second. . . . In that he saith A new covenant, he hath made the first old. But that which becometh old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away;* (2) *And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.*¹ That is to say, the author of the Epistle argued, and argued rightly, from the Old Testament itself, that the Sinaitic covenant was of an external and temporary character, and would be superseded by a more spiritual and permanent union between God and man. And that this union would be brought about by the sin-forgiving grace of God, thereby rendering useless and needless all further offerings for sin.

These two characteristics of the new covenant of the prophets he rightly saw fulfilled in the new covenant inaugurated by Christ in His blood. It definitely superseded the old by fulfilling it; it was *for the remission of sins*, and was sealed by the *one sacrifice for sin for ever*.

Such, then, is the writer's conception of the office and work of Christ, as prophet, priest, and king. And in unfolding His ideas, he continually substantiates his conclusions by the witness of the Old

¹ Heb. x. 17, 18.

Testament. He assumes that a spiritual meaning underlies all the writings contained in the sacred Scriptures. It is not enough to recognize that the O.T. contains prophecies: the O.T. is one vast prophecy. Again, "the application of prophetic words in each case has regard to the ideal indicated by them, and is not limited by the historical fact with which they are connected. But the history is not set aside. The history forces the reader to look beyond."¹

This statement receives emphatic corroboration from a study of the Epistle. It is, moreover, plainly the view of the author himself. Thus he urges his readers to patience under tribulation: *Ye have need of patience that having done the will of God ye may receive the promise.*

*For yet a very little while
He that tarrieth shall come and shall not tarry,
But my righteous one shall live by faith,
And if he shrink back, my soul hath no pleasure in him.*²

This citation from Habakkuk is not theological (as in St. Paul), but intensely practical, for it leads to that magnificent chapter on the heroes of faith which is rightly regarded as one of the most inspiring passages in the whole range of New Testament literature. Its conclusion shows with clearness and dignity the view taken throughout the Epistle on the relation of the old covenant to the new. *These all, having had witness borne to them through their faith, received not the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us, that apart from us they should not be made perfect.*³

¹ Westcott, *Ep. Heb.* 69.

² Heb. x. 36-38, Hab. 3, 4.

³ xi. 39, 40.

The author's practical interest in the lessons to be derived from the Old Testament may further be seen in his reminding the Hebrews of that *exhortation which reasoneth with you as with sons*:

*My son, regard not lightly the chastening of the Lord,
nor faint when thou art reproved of him.
For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,
and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.¹*

He encourages them with the words of Haggai, whose mission also it was to cheer his desponding compatriots: *Yet once more will I make to tremble not the earth only but also the heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signified the removing of these things that are shaken, that those things which are not shaken may remain. Wherefore receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us have thankfulness.²*

He bids them remember that *himself hath said*:

*I will in no wise fail thee, neither forsake thee.³
so that with good courage we may say,*

*The Lord is my helper, I will not fear:
What shall man do unto me? ⁴*

The writer concludes with a benediction which recalls the language of prophecy. He invokes on all the persecuted and distressed Hebrews the blessing of *the God of peace, who brought again from the dead the great shepherd of the sheep, with the blood of the eternal covenant, even our Lord Jesus.⁵* Once

¹ Heb. xii. 5-13, Prov. iii. 11, 12, Is. xxxv. 3.

² xii. 26-28, Hagg. ii. 6.

³ Deut. xxxi. 6.

⁴ Ps. cxviii. 6, the Psalm of the chief corner-stone.

⁵ xiii. 20.

more the words of prophecy would be recalled : *Where is he that brought up from the sea the shepherd of the sheep ?*¹ "The work of Moses was a shadow of that of Christ ; the leading up of him with his people out of the sea was a shadow of Christ's ascent from the grave : the covenant with Israel the shadow of *the eternal covenant.*"²

The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews has performed a great service to Christian scholarship in his interpretation of O.T. prophecy. For "the gospel is not merely the re-awakening of the spirit of prophecy," nor only the accomplishment of its ideals ; "it is also the fulfilment of the spiritual teaching of the law. Christ not only revived all the teaching of the prophets, righteousness, mercy, peace, He also exhibited by His death the teaching of the law, the heinousness of sin, the duty of sacrifice, the spiritual union of God and man."³

We have now carefully considered the use of Old Testament prophecy, under which term we have comprehended all that was regarded as *preparing the way* for Christ and Christianity, by the writers of the New. We have examined the quotations in the Acts and the Epistles. We have, it is true, left untouched the Apocalypse, which, in a sense, is more influenced by prophecy than any other writing of the New Testament. But the use of prophecy in this book is not of much value for our purpose. The allusions are largely of a literary character, and the

¹ Is. lxii. 11.

² Westcott, *op. cit.* 448.

³ S.H., *Rom.* 306.

object of the work, together with the O.T. passages that it incorporates, is of such a nature as would be more suitable to a discussion of the apocalyptic use of prophecy than to a study of its evidential value. Turning, then, to the Acts and the Epistles, let us observe what are the main lines followed by the writers and speakers in their use of Old Testament prophecy.

We may note (1) the *literal* use. The Apostles frequently sought to substantiate their doctrines by an appeal to the Old Testament. The prophets and psalms were found to support these principles of lofty morality and true religion which Jesus Christ had Himself tried to inculcate upon His followers. Prophecy is, therefore, frequently employed to illustrate and corroborate the moral and spiritual aspects of Christian life and ethics.

(2) The *literary* use. The writers of the New Testament often express themselves in the language of Old Testament prophecy. In such cases the object is not to give a logical demonstration, but merely to employ the impressive and sacred words of Scripture as a suitable vehicle for their own ideas. Indeed it may be doubted whether the Apostles had any defined object in this use of psalms and prophets. They would naturally slip into the language with which they were most familiar. They did not in such cases employ any formula of citation, as to do so would have been unnecessary and misleading—for in these instances they did not identify themselves with the thought or argument of the original writer, but merely borrowed language hallowed by the sacred traditions of centuries, in order to give

adequate and forcible expression to the lessons which they themselves wished to enforce.

(3) The *Messianic* use. Messianic prophecy in the New Testament is cited mainly in proof of the Messianic claims of Jesus Christ, and in description of the kingdom which He founded. But in the use of these prophetic passages we may make a threefold subdivision.

(a) *The historical method.* Here again we should notice a double ramification, according as the passages admit of a directly or indirectly Messianic interpretation. The first class consist of passages originally intended in a Messianic sense, which are explained in accordance with their original significance. The latter series of quotations represent a selection from the prophetic writings in which were embodied the most glowing hopes and anticipations for the theocratic king of Israel. Experience, however, had shown that they had never been actually fulfilled, and indeed were incapable of accomplishment under the conditions of the old dispensation. Accordingly, every Jew looked for their realization in Messiah ; and hence the Apostles had ample historical justification for treating such passages as Messianic, and referring them to the Person of Christ.

(b) *The spiritual method.* That is, cases which seem at first sight to be incapable of any Messianic application, are nevertheless so handled that the spiritual lessons they

convey may be seen to have a real correspondence with Gospel truth and Christian experience.

- (c) *The allegorical method.* There yet remain a few instances where passages are used with a Messianic bearing not only absent from, but excluded by, the sense they must have originally borne. This kind of interpretation is unhistorical, though not without its value in contemporary controversy. But even here the Apostles not seldom arrive at a great truth which, if not expressed in that particular passage, is yet in accordance with the spirit of Old Testament prophecy.

"The Messianic interpretation, and with it the further idea of the universality of the Messianic kingdom, arose because they are contained in the O.T. Any incorrectness of exegesis that there may be lies not in the ideas themselves, but in finding them in passages which have probably a different meaning. We are not bound, and it would be wrong to bind ourselves, by the incorrect exegesis of particular passages, but the reality and truth of the Messianic idea and the universal character of the Messianic kingdom, as prophesied in the O.T. and fulfilled in the N.T., remain one of the most real and impressive facts in religious history."¹

¹ Sanday and Headlam, *Romans*, p. 306. Cf. the whole section on *St. Paul's use of the Old Testament*, and compare also Westcott's elaborate study of *the use of the Old Testament in the Epistle to the Hebrews*, 470-495.

PART IX.

THE EVIDENTIAL VALUE OF OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY.

OUR task is now almost finished ; we have attempted to describe the fundamental conceptions of prophecy, and to discriminate between its essential ideas and the relative and dispensational forms in which these ideas found their expression and embodiment ; we have endeavoured to learn from the Lord Himself the true method of the interpretation of the prophets, and we have considered the theory that would see in the gospel narrative nothing but a mythical reproduction of some of the most striking features of the prophetic expectation ; it only remains to state those conclusions as to the apologetic value of prophecy which seem warranted by the evidence at our disposal.

How far then was prophecy fulfilled in Jesus Christ and in the Kingdom He came to found ? Let us first trace its accomplishment in Christ.

1. It was fulfilled in His person.

We will consider this in relation to the three titles employed in the Gospels to denote the chief aspects of His mysterious nature.

(a) *The Son of God.* The voice from Heaven had declared Him such at His baptism, and it is the assumption of the reality of this title that gives meaning to the narrative of the temptation. There can be no doubt that this dignity was expressly claimed by our Lord Himself. It is true that He silenced the demoniacs who recognized his super-human origin. But that was because, as Tertullian says, "it was not meet for demons to usurp the glory of the apostolic office." It was on St. Peter's confession of his Divinity that He declared His Church would be founded.¹ It was as *the Son of God* that He claimed the homage of the man born blind whom He had healed. *Dost thou believe on the Son of God? . . . He it is that speaketh with thee.*² His persistent appropriation of this title laid Him open to the charge of blasphemy which He emphatically repudiated.³ His claims in this respect constitute the only possible explanation of His absolute use of the term *the Father* and *the Son*. Finally, when adjured by the High Priest to return an answer to his interrogation *Art thou the Son of the Blessed?* he replied with a direct and emphatic affirmative.⁴ It is needless to dwell on the apostolic belief on the subject. The faith of the Apostles was identical with the doctrine that found expression in the earliest creeds of the Christian Church,—*that Jesus is the Son of God.*⁵

¹ Mt. xvi. 16, cf. Jn. vi. 69.

² Jn. ix. 35-38.

³ Jn. x. 36, cf. Mt. xxvii. 43.

⁴ Mk. xiv. 61, 62.

⁵ Acts ix. 20, Jn. xx. 31, 1 Jn. iv. 15, v. 5. Cf. Mk. i. 1 (?), Acts viii. 37 (Western text), also Rom. i. 4, 2 Cor. i. 19, Heb. iv. 14, Jn. xi. 27 (Mary's confession of faith), xx. 28 (St. Thomas' adoring acknowledgment of his Master's godhead).

Now what preparation had prophecy made for this stupendous fact? Along no less than four lines it had prepared men's minds for the acceptance of this almost inconceivable thought of the Incarnation of the Son of God.

First. At the basis of all Old Testament religion lay the idea of the restoration of the union between God and man, and the prophets projected into the future the most brilliant hopes of its realization in the person of the theocratic king.

This king was Jehovah's son, His first-born, and this sonship was not based on any theories of physical descent, but on the electing love of God. It made possible the idea of Divine sonship freed from all physical associations yet suggesting to the very highest degree the idea of a unique relationship to Jehovah.

Secondly. In close connection with the above, we have the theocratic conception of the king as the visible representative of Israel's Divine king. This arose from the view that all offices in Israel were really held by Jehovah and that He only delegated His authority to His ministers in their various functions and capacities. So strongly was this felt that the judges could even be called "God," and the Psalmist could address the princes of his day as being by virtue of the Divine appointment themselves *Gods and all of them sons of the Highest*. This theanthropic ideal—which underlies so many passages of the Old Testament—was rightly regarded by our Lord as preparing the way for the recognition of the more complete sonship in Himself (St. John x. 34).

Thirdly. Another series of passages predicted the advent of Jehovah Himself to Zion for the deliverance of His people. Men were therefore prepared to accept the thought of Jehovah dwelling among men,—and it was, as we have seen, the identification of the *day of the Lord* with the second coming of Christ that made possible the application to Christ of language addressed in the O.T. exclusively to Jehovah, and also contributed most powerfully (speaking from a historical standpoint) to guide the Apostles to the full apprehension of His Divine personality.

Fourthly. The various theophanies suggested the possibility of this Divine manifestation taking place through a created being; thus, as in Ezek. xxxiv. *David* and *Jehovah*, so in Mal. iii. the *Angel* and *Jehovah* are interchanged. In this connection we should specially observe the use of the expression *sons of God* used to denote angelic beings. It served to suggest the idea of a Divine Sonship in something of a metaphysical sense.

In all these ways, then, prophecy had prepared the way for the Divine Sonship of Jesus Christ. It made easier the acceptance of the doctrine of the Incarnation. It led men to expect a crowning revelation of Jehovah's righteousness and goodness, through the mediation of the theocratic king. It rendered possible the belief in a Sonship not only by election but by nature. It resulted in the apostolic conviction that Jesus was the Son of God and that at the resurrection He was manifestly declared to be such. Here as elsewhere prophecy prepared, and Christ fulfilled.

(b) *The Son of man.* The Lord's habitual use of this title as a designation of Himself has already been noticed. We saw reason to suppose that He intended by the employment of the term to manifest and yet veil His true character as the ideal representative of humanity whose lot in this disordered world would be sorrow and suffering, but which would finally emerge triumphant from all hindrances and opposition. If the Apostles recognized the Divinity of our Lord, they were no less fully conscious of His true manhood. It was *Christ Jesus, himself man*, that was fitted to be *the one mediator between God and man*.¹ *Through man came the resurrection of the dead*, as it was through man that death also came.² It was as Son of man that Jesus realized potentially for the whole human race the true destiny and dignity of humanity. *Made lower than the angels*, He was yet, through suffering, *crowned with glory and honour*.³ One great object of the Incarnation was to effect the complete fellowship of the Son with the sons—*As therefore the children are sharers in flesh and blood, he also in like manner partook of the same*.⁴

Here, again, we have the prophetic preparation. The struggle and the victory to be only won after painful effort is predicted at the fall; the humility which leads to the adoption of this title by the prophet is found in Ezekiel; the confident assurance of *the Son of man's* ultimate glory appears in Daniel.

The idea of *the Son of man* is essentially a product of Hebrew prophecy. "This teaching is the intellectual and moral preparation for the

¹ 1 Tim. ii. 5. ² 1 Cor. xv. 21. ³ Heb. ii. 9. ⁴ Heb. ii. 14.

Incarnation. Man as a fact has failed ; in the midst of this failure, and with a view to its ultimate remedy, God taught one nation in plain terms that human nature is essentially God-like, a fit medium for the visible manifestation of the Divine. The way is thus open for the Incarnation, the union of God and man, the appearance on this earthly scene of One who as perfect man manifested the perfect image of God.”¹

(c) *The Son of David.* That prophecy had connected a coming deliverer very closely with the person of David, there cannot possibly be any doubt, though we have seen reason to suppose that with the prophets, at any rate, the Davidic descent had not been crystallized into an unalterable dogma. They looked for a being who should represent David’s character and perform David’s work, and in comparison with these two ideas the Davidic origin was of quite secondary importance.

We now ask ourselves, was our Lord the Son of David at all by physical descent? That such was the belief of the earliest Christians there can be no doubt. St. Paul speaks of Christ the Son of God being *of the seed of David after the flesh* in Rom. i. 3 ; and in 2 Tim. ii. 8 the same belief appears as part of “his gospel.” Moreover, this is obviously the supposition implied in the genealogy prefixed to the first Gospel, while the Davidic descent is also referred to in St. Luke’s genealogy, which was apparently compiled with quite a different object in view.

These genealogies shall be the starting point for

¹ *Thoughts on the Incarnation*, by Dean of Westminster, pp. 12-14.

our investigation. Though they are remarkably different in many details they are in one respect remarkably alike. Both trace the Davidic descent through Joseph. Now had Mary been of the tribe of Judah or of the house of David,¹ it is incredible that no allusion should have been made to the fact, since, after all, our Lord was not of the seed of Joseph, and, therefore, Joseph's genealogy would scarcely have been quoted to prove His Davidic origin, had it been equally possible to trace it quite unequivocally through His mother. This view derives some confirmation from the fact of Mary's relationship to Elizabeth, the wife of the Levite Zacharias. This seems to suggest that she may have been of the tribe of Levi, though we cannot speak with certainty on the subject of tribal intermarriage. However, the fact remains that the *proof* of the Davidic origin lies in the genealogies,—and that these deliberately trace the royal descent through Joseph who was not the father of our Lord at all. This difficulty seems to be recognised by St. Luke. He begins Ἰησοῦς ὁν υἱὸς, ὡς ἐνομίζετο, τοῦ Ἰωσήφ . . . τοῦ Δαυίδ. But it is plain that if Joseph's fatherhood is only ὡς ἐνομίζετο, the same phrase must be employed of the descent from all Joseph's ancestors including David. If Joseph was descended from David—a fact we do not propose to call in question—our Lord might have been *supposed* (ἐνομίζετο) to have been David's lineal descendant. But the fact would

¹ Notice especially Lk. ii. 4. Joseph went up from Galilee to Bethlehem, *the city of David, because he was* (not *they were*) *of the house and family of David.*

remain that this was not really the case. If it is only through Joseph that our Lord's Davidic descent can be traced, then in reality He was not the son of David after the flesh.

In this connection it is worthy of notice, that, though our Lord does not refuse the title on the few occasions on which it was used of Him,¹ He never applies the title to Himself, and indeed on one occasion appears expressly to dissociate Himself from the physical interpretation of the phrase.

It is sometimes asserted that to give up this doctrine, is to throw away a fact of very great apologetic value, especially in connection with the Jewish expectation of Messiah's origin. But to this it may be replied—It would have possessed a very great apologetic value for the Jews had our Lord appeared as a victorious king, smiting with the sword the enemies of Israel. We have seen, however, that it is not in the literal fulfilment of such predictions that the true evidential value of prophecy lies. It lies rather in the spiritual correspondence of the fact with the essential ideas of the prophecy which it fulfils. It is in the character of David as a man after God's own heart (cf. esp. Acts xiii. 22-24), that the real value of the Lord's Davidic sonship lies; as those are the sons of Abraham who have Abraham's faith, so is He pre-eminently the son of David who most fulfils those ideals suggested by David's character and history. This was the doctrine for which prophecy constantly prepared.

If, then, the Davidic origin be a fact, it is of

¹ But it may well be that the phrase meant little more than "Messiah" to His contemporaries.

practically no importance compared to the truth of which it is a symbol.¹

(2) Prophecy is fulfilled in our Lord's character: The prophets had indeed drawn a wonderful picture of the ideal ruler of Israel. He should conform his royal will entirely to the will of God. Righteousness should be the keynote of his reign. He would have a father's love for his people. Such were his official virtues: personally he would be *righteous, meek and saved*—that is, he would represent in himself the highest embodiment of all that was meant by Jehovah's salvation. The peaceful character of his reign has its counterpart in the peaceful character of the king. He shall even *speake peace to the heathen*.

Still more marvellous is the correspondence between the portrait of the ideal prophet and the character of our Lord. Kind and sympathetic to the weak and feeble, mild and gentle in his teaching, conscious of the closest personal communion with God, patient under tribulation, manfully enduring the bitterest persecution and vilest indignities without a single bitter or violent word, righteous, nay, sinless; crowning his life of sacrifice by the willing sacrifice of his life for the sin of His people,—such is the prophetic portraiture of the character of the *servant of Jehovah*, which, as is universally admitted, has only found its realization in our Incarnate Lord.

Finally, in the personal holiness and consecration

¹To the present writer it seems that by abandoning the physical descent, we secure an additional argument for the virgin birth, and at the same time a more adequate fulfilment of the prophetic representations on this subject.

to Jehovah's service which characterized the conception of the ideal priest we notice two other ideas of prophecy which found their completest fulfilment in the character of Jesus Christ.

We thus see how prophecy prepared the way for the true appreciation of the character of the personal Messiah whose advent is predicted.

(3) Prophecy is fulfilled in the office of Christ :

A. As KING—

He claims the homage of mankind. To Him is *given all authority in heaven and earth*.¹ The kingdom that He founded and appointed unto His apostles is a witness of His claim to universal love and obedience. *He is the head of the body, the Church*,² and has *dominion over both quick and dead*.³

As *king* Christ was *born*; ⁴ as *king* He died.⁵ To Him had *the kingdom* been *appointed* by His Father, and He in turn bequeathed it to His Apostles.⁶

We should do well at this stage to briefly recapitulate the teaching of the prophets concerning the Messianic king, and note the fulfilment of their teaching in Jesus Christ.

(i.) Prophecy always insisted on the fact that *the kingdom should be Jehovah's*.⁷ If this kingdom was to be entrusted to the Messianic prince, it would yet be so perfectly administered as not to obscure even for a moment the cardinal doctrine of Jehovah's sovereignty. The Lord Jesus was once asked, *Lord*,

¹ Mt. xxviii. 18.

² Col. i. 18.

³ Rom. xiv. 9.

⁴ Mt. ii. 1.

⁵ Jn. xviii. 37, xix. 19.

⁶ 1 k. xxii. 29.

⁷ Ps. xxii. 28, Obad. 21.

show us the Father and it sufficeth us. His answer shows us how completely this O.T. idea of perfect mediation was fulfilled in Him. *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father.*¹

(ii.) The theocratic king ruling on Jehovah's throne was to be the visible representative of the invisible King. He would entirely subordinate his royal will to the will of Jehovah. The Divine will should be the all-determining standard in his every action. Surely this was *the* characteristic of our Lord's earthly ministry—His complete self-surrender to his Father's will. Not only did He teach His disciples to pray, *Our Father, thy will be done,*² but He Himself in the hour of agony prayed thrice, *Not as I will, but as thou wilt.*³

(iii.) The king should in virtue of his sacred office be called *the son of God*, and he should receive the fullest endowment of the Spirit for his God-given task. May we not see an outward fulfilment of these promises in the Voice which, at the Baptism, proclaimed Jesus as the Son of God, while the Spirit descended upon Him to seal as it were the official inauguration of His Messianic career.⁴

(iv.) The king was to destroy the enemies of the kingdom, and Christ by His death destroyed *death, the last enemy to be abolished,*⁵ and brought to nought him that had the power of death, even the devil;⁶ while by His life of spotless innocence He broke the power, as by His death He cleansed the guilt, of sin.

¹ Jn. xiv. 8, 9.

² Mt. vi. 9, 10.

³ Mk. xiv. 36.

⁴ Mk. i. 11.

⁵ I Cor. xv. 26.

⁶ Heb. ii. 14.

(v.) No language was too exalted to apply to the promised king.

a. The most distant nations should render him fitting homage. Leaving out of sight for a moment the universal worship paid to the Master by the Christian world, this prophecy found a literal fulfilment in the adoration of the infant Christ by the wise men from the east. And once more the literal fulfilment was but the earnest of the completed spiritual accomplishment.

β. *Of his kingdom there shall be no end.*¹ *The king asked life of thee, and thou gavest him a long life, even for ever and ever.*² In the resurrection of Jesus Christ this promise was fulfilled in a manner which must have far transcended the hopes of those who originally gave it utterance.

(vi.) The king is *Son of David*, and the truth of this prediction is not minimized if our Lord fulfilled it by spiritual correspondence rather than by physical descent.

(vii.) The king was to be *born at Bethlehem*,³ and

(viii.) *enter Jerusalem riding on an ass*,⁴ two circumstantial predictions minutely fulfilled in the historical life of Christ, and doubtless designed in the Providence of God to call attention to the deeper and more spiritual fulfilment of prophecy in the life and character and mission of Jesus Christ.

B. As PROPHET—

He is as one commissioned by God to teach His people; He therefore speaks *with authority and not*

¹ Lk. i. 33, cf. Is. ix. 7.

² Ps. xxi. 4.

³ Mic. v. 2.

⁴ Zech. ix. 9.

as the scribes; ¹ for he knows the Father, even as the Father knows Him.² As prophet, He realizes that He has been *anointed* by Jehovah to *preach good tidings* of liberty and joy.³ As prophet, He has the double mission to perform—the seeking after *the lost sheep of the house of Israel*,⁴ and the instructing of the nations in His law, *Go ye then into all the world, and make disciples of all the nations*.⁵ As in the Old Testament representation, He does not begin His universal mission to mankind until by the power of God He has emerged from *the dust of death*⁶ into which His countrymen have sought to bring Him. As prophet, He must know the prophet's tragic disappointment—the refusal of the hardened people to accept the truth of God He has come to bring. As prophet He may be *despised and rejected*; ⁷ but His words have a living force, and all will do well to *take heed how they hear*.⁸ *To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts*.⁹ As prophet it falls to his lot to inaugurate the new covenant for the remission of sins,¹⁰ which will result in the complete knowledge of God by every member of the redeemed community.

C. AS PRIEST—

He fulfils all those conceptions which centre round the priestly ideal.

(i.) He represented God, and in His Name instructed and blessed the people.

¹ Mt. vii. 29, Mk. i. 22.

² Jn. x. 14, 15.

³ Lk. iv. 10, Is. lxi. 1.

⁴ Mt. xv. 24.

⁵ Mt. xxviii. 19.

⁶ Ps. xxii. 15.

⁷ Is. liii. 3.

⁸ Lk. viii. 18.

⁹ Ps. xcv. 7, Heb. iv. *passim*.

¹⁰ Mt. xxvi. 18, Jer. xxxi. 31, 34.

(ii.) He represented man. He shared their flesh and blood. He was made in all things like unto them. *He was tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin*, that he might feel sympathy with His brethren in their distress.¹

(iii.) He yet had access to God, approaching *by his own blood, through the veil*,² into the immediate presence of God.

(iv.) He was himself holy—*holy, guileless, undefiled*.³

(v.) The priest should make intercession for his people. And so did Christ, in the days of His earthly pilgrimage, *with crying and strong tears*.⁴ And now in Heaven, *he ever liveth to make intercession for us*.⁵

(vi.) As priest, He makes *the sacrifice of himself*,⁶ to gain *eternal redemption*⁷ for His people.

(vii.) As priest, He offers to His people the power of the life He has laid down, and communicates to them the grace which He has won for each faithful believer.

His priesthood is eternal, sovereign, universal—*after the order of Melchizedek*.⁸

D. As MESSIAH—

In each and all of these offices He is anointed by God for the particular office He is called upon to fill—the true Immanuel, the pledge of the presence of God with His people in all their sorrows and troubles, yet with the promise of ultimate victory because *God is with them*.⁹

¹ Heb. iv. 15.

² x. 19, 20.

³ vii. 26.

⁴ v. 7.

⁵ vii. 25.

⁶ ix. 26.

⁷ ix. 12.

⁸ Ps. cx. 1, Heb. *passim*.

⁹ Cf. Mt. i. 23.

E. As THE STONE—

He it is in whom Israel's own call and destiny were typified and spiritualized. He too is rejected by those in authority ; yet in the end God's selection is triumphantly vindicated—and He becomes the *head stone in the corner*.¹

F. As SHEPHERD—

He *seeks the lost, binds up the broken*.² He grieves with their sorrow, and is smitten in their affliction. He brings all the scattered sheep into *one flock*; and *other sheep which are not of this fold, them too must He bring*.³ The shepherd of the prophetic allegory is pierced—the good shepherd of the gospel *lays down his life for the sheep*.⁴ This parable revives the tenderest imagery of Old Testament prophecy.

Such the correspondence between prophetic prediction and evangelical accomplishment. The offices of the Messiah as portrayed in the gospels and expounded by the Apostles were legitimately deduced from the doctrines of the prophets.

(4) Prophecy is fulfilled in the teaching of Christ.

(i.) He proclaimed the establishment of a kingdom which should be based upon *righteousness*. Its fundamental law was—*Except your righteousness exceed (not be less than) the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven*.⁵

(ii.) It was to be marked by the unity of all its members. The Lord prayed that *they may all be*

¹ Ps. cxviii. 22, Mk. xii. 10 and parallels, Acts iv. 11, Eph. ii. 20, 1 Pet. ii. 7, 8.

² Ezek. xxxiv. 16.

³ Jn. x. 16.

⁴ *Ibid.* 11.

⁵ Mt. v. 20.

*one, as thou Father, in me, and I in thee, that they may be one in us.*¹ His work would only then be accomplished when there should be *one flock, one shepherd.*

(iii.) It was to be marked by the most profound peace—not such as the world giveth, but something far deeper. *Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you.*² The rule of the members was to *be at peace one with another.*³ The gift of the risen Lord was the gift of peace. *When the doors were shut for fear of the Jews, came Jesus and stood in the midst and saith unto them, Peace be unto you.*⁴

(iv.) The kingdom should be entirely independent of all national limitations. It should be as the great tree to which all the fowls of the air should resort.⁵ Many would *come from the east and the west and sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven.*⁶ The kingdom should be extended to *other sheep not of this fold;*⁷ indeed it should embrace *all nations.*⁸

(v.) Lastly the kingdom of Christ's teaching should not only be universal but eternal. As it was for *all the nations* so should it continue for *all the days.*⁹

Now it will be seen that our Lord's teaching on this point exactly corresponds to the prophetic picture of the kingdom of God. They had declared that the kingdom should be righteous, peaceful, united, universal, everlasting. In its insistence on

¹ Jn. xvii. 22, 23.

² Jn. xiv. 27.

³ Mk. ix. 50.

⁴ Jn. xx. 19, cf. 26.

⁵ Cf. Mt. xiii. 32.

⁶ Mt. viii. 11.

⁷ Jn. x. 16.

⁸ Mt. xxviii. 19.

⁹ *Ibid.*

each of these characteristics prophecy *prepared the way* for the teaching of Christ.

(5) Prophecy is fulfilled in the life of Christ.

The Son of man went *as it is written concerning him*.¹ The prophets had long ago foreseen the refusal of the chosen people to respond to Jehovah's love. The fate which the prophets met at the hand of their own countrymen had suggested the most gloomy reflections as to the reception which the people would accord to the Messiah when at last He came.²

This idea of suffering was brought out with the utmost fulness in the account of the fate of the servant of Jehovah as recorded by Deutero-Isaiah and the author of the psalms dealing with *the servant's* character and history.

He is misunderstood by his own countrymen, and spitefully entreated by them. He is scourged, spitted on, insulted, condemned to death by a perversion of justice; he suffers the acutest agony, he is parched with thirst, he becomes an object of universal scorn and derision, his hands and his feet are pierced; he is finally slain, while his raiment is divided by lot, and though in reality dying a martyr's death he is yet *numbered with the transgressors*.³

But—most amazing fact of all—he is raised from the dead, and resumes his justifying work. His own people are smitten with remorse for their cruel act, and *mourn for him whom they pierced*; ⁴ while to the uttermost ends of the earth his name is highly exalted.

¹ Mk. xiv. 21. ² Mt. xxii. 35, 37. ³ Is. liii. 12.

⁴ Zech. xii. 10, cf. Jn. xix. 37, Apoc. i. 7.

There is no need to enlarge upon the realization of this prophetic picture in the life and sufferings, the death and resurrection of our Lord. It would merely be repainting the picture delineated by a master hand.

This, however, brings us to the consideration of the exact fulfilment of circumstantial details of prophecy. That such was indeed the case we cannot doubt. But on what principle is the phenomenon to be explained?

Our Lord would have fulfilled the prophecy of Zech. ix. 9 even if He had not entered Jerusalem riding upon an ass. But we have seen cause to believe that He deliberately chose this mode of entry in order to call attention to the spirit, by fulfilling the letter, of Zechariah's prophecy. Similarly we may believe that some of the details of the Passion, as also the Birth at Bethlehem, were provisionally so arranged as to correspond with the minutest features of the prophetic representation, in order to call attention to the deep underlying spiritual truths.¹

Such, then, is the fulfilment of prophecy which we claim to find in Jesus Christ. In His person, in

¹ In this connection we may quote the words of Baethgen on Psalm xxii. : Indem Jesus sich die Anfangsworte des Psalmes in der höchsten Seelenangst aneignet, hat Er damit aufgedeutet dass das Leiden über welches der Sänger klagt in seinem eignen Leiden culminirt. Auch ist die messianische Hoffnung des Psalms nicht durch Israel als Volk sondern nur durch Jesus Christus Thatsache geworden. Die einzelnen Züge der Ubereinstimmung in der Leidengeschichte des Herrn mit dem vorüber der Psalmist klagt (2, 8, 9, 15, 16, 17, 19,) treten an Bedeutsamkeit zurück hinter der Thatsache dass das was Israel in Psalm von sich selbst aussagt nur durch seinen grössten Sohn erfüllt ist.

His character, in His offices, in His teaching, in His life and death and resurrection from the dead, all that was written concerning Him received its completest accomplishment, not indeed always in the letter, but invariably in the spirit—for *the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy*.¹

But now let us turn from theory to fact, and examine whether the history of the kingdom which He founded corresponds to any appreciable extent with the glowing ideals of the prophetic expectations.

The kingdom was to begin from Jerusalem—so said all the prophets—and was not this actually the case? Does not the *beginning from Jerusalem*² correspond to the prophet's vision of the future when *out of Zion should go forth instruction and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem*.³ That is to say, can we not see here the fulfilment of God's providential election of Israel to be *a light of the Gentiles*?⁴ In that same connection we note that the Lord and all His Apostles, the Lord's brother and the great Apostle of the Gentiles, were all Jews, *Hebrews of Hebrews*.⁵ Do not we see in the conversion of the world through their instrumentality an accomplishment of the Divine promise to ideal Israel—that it would be through him that *judgment shall be set in the earth, and the isles shall wait for Jehovah's law*?⁶

Secondly, the establishment of the kingdom was to coincide with the inauguration of the new covenant, whose main characteristic would be absolute spiritu-

¹ Apoc. xix. 10.

² Lk. xxiv. 47.

³ Is. ii. 3.

⁴ Is. xlii. 7, xlix. 6, Lk. ii. 32.

⁵ Cf. Phil. iii. 5.

⁶ Is. xlii. 4.

ality and of which the special promise would consist in the forgiveness of sins. This again was actually realized. The kingdom of God *was* founded on a new covenant to which the holy sacrament of the altar bears perpetual witness. And it is also a fact that remission of sins has been and still is preached in Messiah's name to every creature. Again, this spirituality finds its proper sphere in the Church of God :—*my church*,¹ as Jesus called it—the temple made without hands that the Lord has raised up to replace the sanctuary made with hands,² where spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise and thanksgiving are constantly being offered up to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(i.) The kingdom was to be established in righteousness; and it was the ideal of righteousness that our Lord constantly kept before His followers. Now the establishment of a kingdom on this basis is a fact which no one can dispute. Alike to the Jew and to the Gentile the very idea of such a kingdom entirely unconnected with any political associations would have seemed impossible if not absurd. But the kingdom still exists—and its laws still exist. We thus have the *fact* of its establishment, no less than the *fact* of its prediction, on precisely that basis which seemed most improbable at the time. Such facts do not admit of being explained away.

(ii.) The kingdom was to unite all its members in the common bond of one holy faith and one holy life. Has not this also been fulfilled in the Christian Church? Is it not now universally recognized that *in Christ there is neither male nor*

¹ Mt. xvi. 18.

² Cf. Jn. ii. 19, Mk. xiv. 58.

*female, bond nor free, Jew nor Gentile, Greek nor Scythian?*¹ Despite the unhappy divisions which mar the fair features of Christendom, is there not still sufficient unity visible, to enable us to say with St. Paul—*There is one body and one spirit, as there is also one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, and Father of all?*²

(iii.) The kingdom was to be a kingdom of peace. The king should *speak peace to the nations*.³ Again, we note the fulfilment Christ *has come and preached peace to those that are afar off*.⁴ In Him all rivalries are hushed. *He is our peace who hath made both one*.⁵ In Him His followers know of *the peace which passeth all understanding*,⁶ that stands sentinel at the door of their heart.⁷ But can we not also discern a more literal fulfilment? Can we not see how Christianity is gradually abolishing both the horror and the frequency of war? Can we not see that through the influence of Christian thought the time is even now approaching when He shall *make wars to cease in all the world*⁸ and *give his people the blessing of peace?*⁹

(iv.) The kingdom was to be universal. It was to know nothing of political or national restrictions, an idea which it took many centuries for the prophets to develop, and which was entirely foreign to the age when the Church first received her commission to *go and make disciples of all nations*.¹⁰ We know of the almost insuperable obstacles to the

¹ Col. iii. 11, Gal. iii. 28.

² Eph. iv. 4, 5.

³ Zech. ix. 10.

⁴ Eph. ii. 17.

⁵ *Ibid.* 14.

⁶ Phil. iv. 7.

⁷ φρουρήσει τὰς καρδίας.

⁸ Ps. xlv. 9.

⁹ Ps. xxix. 11.

¹⁰ Mt. xxviii. 19.

realization of this universal diffusion of the good news of the kingdom that were yet surmounted by Christian patience and Christian zeal; and here once more prophecy has become a fact. The diminutive body of terrified disciples who assembled together on the first Easter Day has now grown into a truly catholic Church which weekly celebrates the resurrection of the Lord with joy and gladness throughout the whole world.

(v.) Lastly, the kingdom was to be eternal. It would not be overthrown by violence nor overwhelmed by disaster. It should be eternal, for *God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed.*¹ Yet once again fact replaces prophecy. Despite the persecutions of almost incredible ferocity with which the hatred of the Jews and the organized resources of the mighty Roman empire essayed to shatter her faith, and obliterate her existence, she still remains, *conquering and to conquer*, a living witness to the truth of our Lord's promise that *the gates of hell shall not prevail against her*,² and that His presence would be with her *all the days even unto the end of the ages*.³

In one respect however the fulfilment has far transcended prophetic imagination. To all the prophets religion was mainly a national matter. Very rarely did it burst these bonds and come forth into the pure air of individual freedom. Personal religion was of course not unknown, but it occupied a distinctly subsidiary position; it was to Israel *as a nation* that the prophets mainly addressed themselves. The Church of Christ inherits all the

¹ Ps. xlv. 5.

² Mt. xvi. 18.

³ Mt. xxviii. 20.

prerogatives and privileges of ancient Israel; but it is composed of *living stones*,¹ for the basis of Christian belief is not national but personal. Jeremiah had indeed predicted the coming of the day when all should *know the Lord, from the greatest of them to the least of them*.² That day has long dawned; but with a glorious radiancy such as Jeremiah can never have hoped to see.

Such, then, is the fulfilment of the prophetic kingdom of God, a church based on a new covenant, bringing with it the remission of sins; a church whose corporate life and organized membership, so far from thrusting into the background, serves only to bring into greater prominence the ideas of individual responsibility and personal privileges; a church that is spiritual, united, peaceful, universal, eternal.

In what, then, does the evidential value of Old Testament prophecy consist?

(1) By its wonderful superiority to contemporary ideals and expectations it gives evidence of a *Divine origin*.

(2) By its unparalleled persistence in refusing to let go the hope of Israel despite the distress and despair occasioned by national calamities and grievous disillusionments, it gives evidence of a *Divine power* at work upholding and sustaining the prophets in all their dangers and difficulties.

(3) By its marvellous preparation for the life of Christ and for the doctrines which He preached and the kingdom which He founded, it gives evidence

¹ 1 Pet. ii. 4.

² Jer. xxxi. 34.

of a great *Divine plan* ever at work for the redemption of mankind.

The Incarnation is no isolated event: as such, its significance might be minimized, its reality questioned. But it stands in the most intimate connection with that age-long preparation which we see unfolded in the prophetic literature. *Ever since the world began God's holy prophets*¹ had been *preparing the way* for the apprehension of this crowning act of God's mercy and God's love.

"The faith of the Apostles was not a new religion, but a new stage in the old religion of Israel, and it derived a large part of its claims to acceptance from this its appeal to the past in conjunction with the present. The dream of a Christianity without Judaism soon arose, and could not but arise—but though it could make appeal to a genuine zeal for the purity of the gospel, it was in effect an abnegation of apostolic Christianity. When robbed of His Messiahship, our Lord became an isolated portent, and the true meaning of faith in Him was lost. This was one of the most fundamental subjects of controversy in the second century, and with good reason the watchword of the champions of the apostolic teaching was the harmony of prophets with Apostles."²

Christianity does not take its rise from the birth of Christ; far rather may it be said to begin in the most primeval days of Israel's history, when men first, under prophetic guidance, began to feel the power of sin and the hope of a coming Deliverer. It is in this *preparation of the way of the Lord*

¹ Acts iii. 21, Lk. i. 70.

² Hort, *Ep. Pet.* 57.

that the significance of prophecy consists. It shows us that Christianity was no mere product of chance, no accidental movement, but the consummation of the Divine purpose fixed *from the foundation of the world*.¹

Much of prophecy, it is true, yet remains unfulfilled; this is not only the case with those dispensational elements whose non-fulfilment, as we have tried to show in a previous chapter, need cause us no trouble. Some of its more glorious hopes are still no more than ideals; but are we not justified in hoping from the large measure of fulfilment which prophecy has already received, that the time will yet come when *the kingdom of the world is become the kingdom of the Lord and of his Christ*,² when *all Israel shall be saved, and the fulness of the Gentiles be gathered in*,³ when faith shall be swallowed up in sight, when *God shall be all in all*?⁴

Meanwhile we must wait in hope. The prophets did not despair, though they seldom lived to see the results of their labours, and never witnessed anything more than a very partial fulfilment of their prophecies. *For likewise it was revealed that not unto themselves but unto us did they minister the things which are now reported unto you, which the spirit of Christ that was in them did point unto, even the sufferings of Christ and the glories that should follow them*.⁵

We are more fortunate than they, for we have the prophetic word and its fulfilment in the Person and

¹ Mt. xiii. 35, Eph. i. 4, 1 Pet. i. 20, Apoc. xiii. 8.

² Rev. xi. 15. ³ Rom. xi. 25, 26. ⁴ 1 Cor. xv. 28.

⁵ 1 Pet. i. 9, 10.

Kingdom of Christ to fall back upon. We therefore will wait in hope for its yet more complete accomplishment—but meanwhile, in the words of the great Alexandrian scholar, “It is no slight aid to faith, in accordance with the principles we have laid down, that the prophets foretold much concerning Jesus, and that their predictions actually happened to the Redeemer in accordance with their utterances.”¹

¹ οὐκ εὐκαταφρόνητον πρὸς τὸ ποιεῖν πιστεῦειν ἔστι κατὰ τὰ νῦν προκειμένα, τὸ τοὺς προφῆτας μὲν προτεθεσπικέναι τὰ περὶ τοῦ Ἰησοῦ, κατὰ δὲ τὸν λόγον αὐτῶν ἀπηντηκέναι τῷ σωτῇρι τὰ προειρημένα. (Origen *in Jo.* Tom. xxxii. § 16).

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